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THE NEW REPUBLIC

April 7, 1979 Price One Dollar

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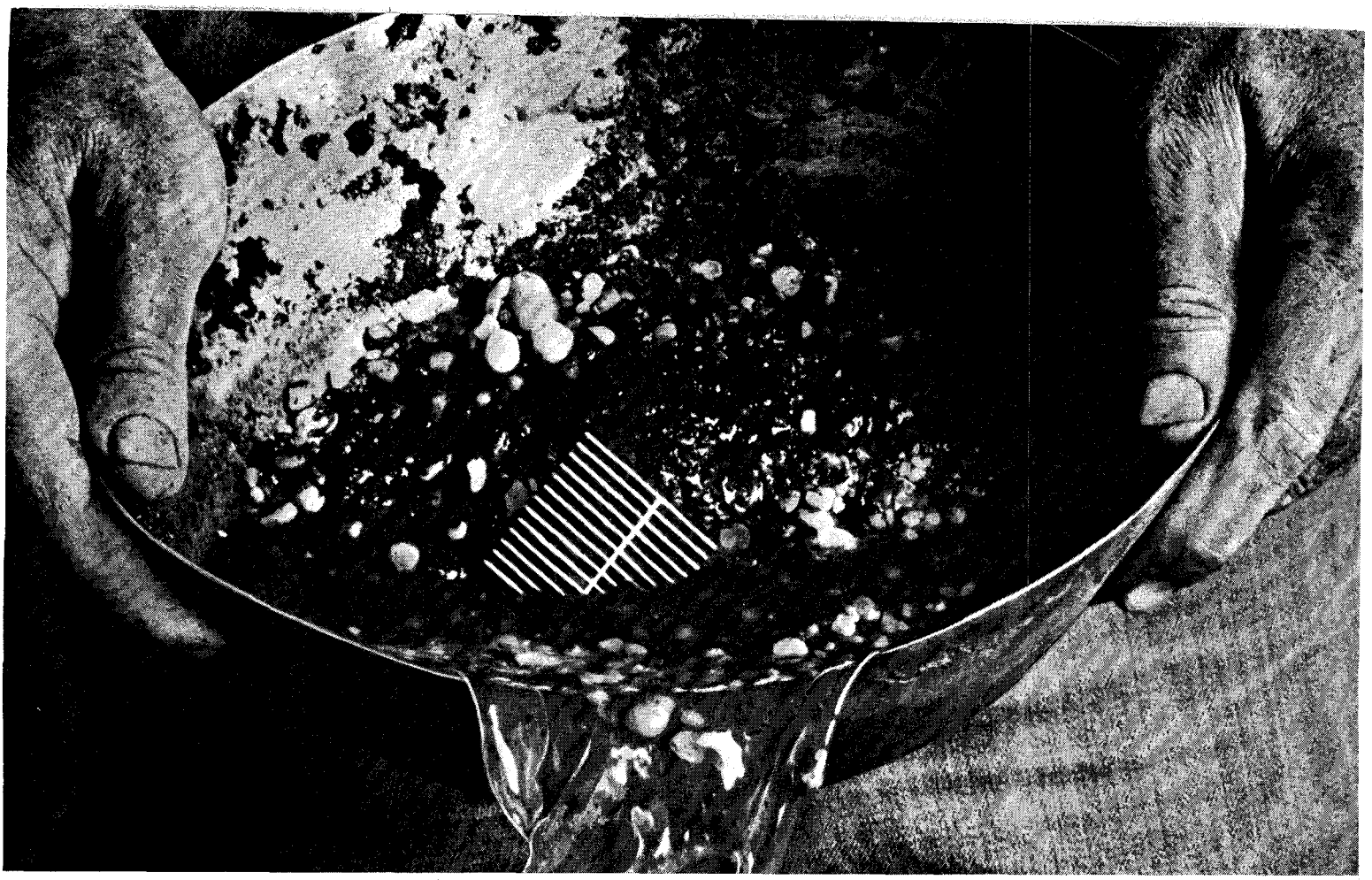

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TRB

from Washington
April 7, 1979

Catastrophists and Cornucopians

We need a good clarion call from Jimmy Carter. His energy speech may give it. He's had a triumph in achieving the Egyptian-Israeli treaty, which will result in peace, maybe. The maybe-treaty is going to cost Americans plenty, but never mind that; peace is worth it. Now comes something a lot nearer home: Carter's voluntary energy-inflation programs are near collapse. He needs strong action and a rousing speech. When he gives it we hope he visualizes chairman Mana Saed al Otaiba of OPEC, who is oil minister of the United Arab Emirates. Chairman Otaiba is laughing at us. His seven emirates have only 220,000 people, but so what, they have a lot of oil, and they joined the rest of the oil cartel last week to increase prices by nine percent plus any extra surcharges the individual countries may want to impose.

It's an ignominious situation for Uncle Sam but well worth it if it finally shocks America into doing the things it should have done five and a half years ago with the Arab embargo. That's when the Oil Age began coming to an end. The Age started in 1859 when Colonel E. L. Drake set up a drilling rig near Titusville, Pennsylvania, while the townspeople hooted. He brought in oil just in time for the Civil War, when the whale oil gave out. After 100 years a Shell Oil geologist named M. King Hubbert decided in 1956 to use a speech opportunity before the American Petroleum Institute to say that US oil production would "peak out" in 10 to 15 years, followed by a long, slow decline. Shell officials phoned Hubbert not to make the speech but he did anyway and production did peak out around 1970. Now we import most of our oil.

In 1974 Nixon tut-tutted the oil shortage, and announced Project Independence. Conservatives tend to ridicule "radical" doomsayers. The 70 members of the Club of Rome, headed by a prominent industrialist, are not particularly radical, however; what they want is advance planning. In their report, "The Limits of Growth" (1972), they concluded that global raw materials will be in short supply early in the next century (with population exploding) and declared, "The most probable result will be a rather sudden and uncontrollable decline in both population and industrial capacity."

I have before me the 211-page report of the National Commission on Supplies and Shortages (1974) submitted to President Ford in December 1976. Members included Alan Greenspan, Ford's right-wing economic adviser and Bill Simon, conservative secretary of the Treasury. When it came to mineral resources the commission laughed at "catastrophists." No lack of resources "will seriously strain our economic growth for the next quarter-century and probably for generations," it reported. Yes, it agreed, "a brief gasoline shortage in the spring and summer of 1973" did occur; it was caused by three factors, all temporary, and largely psychological. "The October 1973 Arab oil embargo provoked a shortage mentality on the part of both the consumers and producers of gasoline." The government, unfortunately, yielded to this shortage mentality with intervention and controls. Anyway, the report added comfortably, "by May [1974] crude oil imports had reached pre-embargo levels and the supply outlook was one of near-surplus."

Three US commissions have reported on mineral supply shortages—in 1952, in 1973 and in 1976, and the president might well name a new one now. It looks as though the world is making another big global fuel switch. Such switches are always accompanied by great social change. The switch from wood to coal brought the industrial revolution. The switch to oil transformed travel, restructuring cities and shrinking the planet. What comes next? One theory is that we will go back to coal, or maybe try nuclear power. But nuclear power is a vast disappointment so far: there is the problem of radioactive waste. If the postulated demand were met by nuclear fission, about 15,000 reactors as large as the biggest yet built would have to be constructed: one new reactor a day for 50 years. It seems unlikely for now.

So we turn back to good old safe and sane coal. There's lots of it. But its combustion necessarily produces carbon dioxide and there would be enormous amounts if it took the full burden of oil. Making allowance for increased population there would probably be a 4 percent increase in carbon dioxide a year: scientists think that would produce the so-called "greenhouse effect" in the earth's atmosphere and dramatically alter the heat balance of the world. We would have all those polar ice caps melting.

One thing we can do; that's conserve energy. Denis Hayes of Worldwatch Institute argues that America wastes more fuel every year than is used by two-thirds of the world's population. American motor cars are so big that smaller imports have grabbed 20 percent of the market. With today's fuel scare, lines wait for a VW Rabbit with diesel engine: you can get one in eight months or so. To avoid occasionally moving their feet 10 inches or their hands six inches, Hayes observes, most American car buyers pay extra for automatic transmissions, which decrease gasoline mileage by 10 percent or more.

While we are waiting for Jimmy Carter's energy plans these early spring days in Washington, it's nice to dream about Denis Hayes's own forecast in the matter: solar energy. By that he doesn't just mean only sun rays concentrated by ingenius focusing mirrors hung up in the sky; he means forests and vegetation; falling water that the sun first pulled up by evaporation; tides that the sun controls; winds created by differences in temperature. These forces are already waiting for us, the solar buffs say, just asking to be harnessed.

It's nice to think about; the sun is pouring the stuff down all the time, abundant, dependable, free. It's a poetic thought, running the world's factories on sunbeams; and until President Carter speaks, I'm going to stick with it. In Denis Hayes's book, *Rays of Hope* (Norton, 1977), there's a lyrical touch at the end: "The attractions of sunlight, wind, running water, and green plants as energy sources are self-evident." You bet. After all these OPEC insults and the nasty arguments between Catastrophists and Cornucopians, with their jargon of "plutonium reactors" and "petroleum metric tons," I prefer to be a simple utopian. Just the idea of a meadow, somewhere, sopping up sunbeams.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

April 7, 1979

In Search of More Sadats

The perils and prices associated with the Egyptian-Israeli-American peace treaty are being extensively remarked upon, but we prefer, this week, to call attention to the lessons and opportunities of this historic pact. Persistence in the cause of peace is what produced the treaty, and now we hope that it will be maintained by all three of the treaty's parties, and that it can be extended to those who are still hostile.

We know that the Arabs will rant awhile in Baghdad. Sadly, innocents are likely to be killed in bombings and guerrilla raids. Checks will flow from Tripoli and Riyadh to those who do the killings. The upsurge of rejectionist radicalism will be both rhetorical and real. But somewhere there must be another Arab leader wise and cool enough to see that Anwar Sadat has achieved more for his people through his peace strategy than 30 years of hostility have accomplished for the rest of the Arab world. Egypt's territory is to be restored. The fear of war is to be lifted. The prospect for prosperity is brightened. To achieve these gains, Sadat had to acknowledge Israel's right to exist in peace and security, and give that acknowledgment some substance in the ordinary relations between two peoples. Will no other Arab do the same?

Anwar Sadat has made himself an archetype. We can think of no figure like him in mythology and literature—the courageous, visionary leader who transcends his own and his nation's hatreds and fears to offer peace to his enemy and, doing so, endures the taunts and enmity of his friends. The question then is: will history portray Sadat as a leader who made a gesture for peace and then was ruined? Or as one whose acts of courage opened the way toward general and enduring peace?

The Israelis, surely, have an interest in securing Sadat's station in history. Israel has shown the sincerity of its declarations, made over all the years of its existence, that what it wants most from its neighbors is peace and acceptance. Until Sadat broke the Arab pattern, Israel received nothing from its neighbors but hostility and threats to its existence. Confronted with what seemed a genuine offer of peace from one Arab nation, Israel has responded generously. Among Israel's heads of state, in fact, the most ideologically expansive of Zionists, Menahem Begin, has been the most generous (and courageous too) in offering to restore territory in Sinai and self-rule for the Palestinians.

What would happen if another Arab nation were to follow Egypt's lead? We are sure that it, too, would be met generously. Were the Palestinian Arabs to adopt a "peace strategy" of their own, and were their leaders to pass various tests of decent intentions, we doubt that Israel would permanently resist according them self-determination. The Jews have experienced dispersion, persecution and national rebirth. They do not want to be occupiers and oppressors of other people—if those people will agree to live peacefully with the Jews. Surely, the peace option is better for the Palestinians than having generation after generation of their children grow up rootless, exploited and filled with hate.

This is, to be sure, no simple matter. Complicated territorial and extra-territorial arrangements would be necessary to protect Israel from the resilient armed animus on its frontiers. These are not insurmountable impediments. But realistically, it does not appear that any Arab leader or group has the courage right now to follow Sadat and explore the ways of peace. So Israel, the United States and Egypt will have to work hard to insure that Sadat becomes an archetype for success. He faces serious internal threats at home, but these should diminish as soon as the concrete rewards of peace are visible. Israel can help Sadat by avoiding provocative

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statements and actions that will further isolate Sadat in the Arab world and snuff out whatever flickers of moderation may exist there. Especially, it should avoid huge settlement projects in the West Bank and Gaza. No one should expect Israel to bargain any less hard over the future of the West Bank than it did over terms for Sinai. But Israel should create incentives for nations and groups to bargain. It can do so by offering meaningful autonomy proposals for the Gaza strip as examples of what might occur in the West Bank. Already, Israel's unilateral gestures toward West Bank residents—finally ending the administrative detention rules that date back to the British Mandate, rejoining displaced Arabs with their families, expanding permitted political activity and removing military headquarters from cities—are earnests of Israel's conciliatory intentions.

President Carter has earned his Nobel Peace Prize. He has not always been the deftest of diplomats, but he has been tireless and tenacious. He needs to remain so. The United States has undertaken duties to guarantee and finance the Egyptian-Israeli peace. This will require a US presence in the Middle East and substantial outlays, which we trust Congress will support. The US will need to oversee compliance with terms of the treaty and shepherd along the negotiations over the West Bank and Gaza. The United States must give financial and technical support to Egypt, to insure that the promise of greater prosperity in that country is fulfilled. But most of all, the United States needs to work to create conditions for another Sadat to emerge from the Arab world, and then another and another. This will require sympathetic understanding. But it also will require firmness: the continuation of our economic support and political backing for those Arabs now outside and hostile to the peace process should depend on their joining it. That means, most obviously, King Hussein of Jordan; and Syria, which still gets $40 million a year in US aid. Those who say that we cannot move the Arabs to do so probably also predicted that the treaty signing at the White House never could have happened. Yet Begin, Sadat and Carter did stand together, and quoted one another's Books, and made peace.

White House Watch

A Time For Love

The realist on Jimmy Carter's great day, the day of the signing of the Egypt-Israel peace treaty that he had said "may be the most significant occurrence during my term of office as President," was Jimmy Carter. At the signing on the White House lawn, staged for worldwide television with the stately columns of the north portico in the background, and at dinner in a rented tent for 1350 guests that evening, President Sadat of Egypt hailed "a new dawn" in the Middle East and said that "the man who performed the miracle was President Carter." Prime Minister Begin of Israel, recalling that he and Sadat had been awarded the 1978 Nobel Peace Prize when everybody thought peace between Israel and Egypt had been achieved at Camp David last September, nominated Carter for the 1979 Nobel prize. Carter deserved all that was said of him and applauded, often and justifiably, when it was said. But only Carter among the three—Carter, Sadat, Begin—said that the treaty is "the first step of peace, the first step on a long and difficult road." And: "We have no illusions—we have hopes, dreams, prayers, yes—but no illusions." And: "Just because a paper is signed, all the problems will not automatically go away." After Begin nominated Carter for the 1979 Nobel prize and Sadat, obviously feeling a bit one-upped, supported the nomination of "our dear friend, President Carter," the President used a happy and lightsome occasion to make a serious point: "I might point out to President Sadat and to Prime Minister Begin that if the next nine months of negotiations"—here the transcript of the proceedings notes "laughter, applause"—"are completely harmonious, constructive, cooperative and in the spirit of friendship, and if we meet all the requirements of the Camp David agreements and of the peace treaty we signed today, then I might consider accepting their nomination. But otherwise, they have made their toasts in vain." Here the transcript again records "laughter." One may be sure that Carter was not laughing inwardly.

After the recent haggling between the Israeli, Egyptian and US governments—the haggling that seemed until Carter went to the Mideast to have killed any chance of a treaty that could have been signed last December—the draft signed in Washington March 26 is identical in every word, without exception, to the tentative draft put around by the State Department last November after the Egyptians and Israelis had leaked slightly different versions to their media. The changes brought about by the haggling and during the final fevered negotiations, right up to and some hours after the signing of the basic treaty, occur in sundry annexes, letters of understanding and qualifying "minutes" that in effect modify and are parts of the treaty. Some of the last bargaining must seem to a detached observer to have been over unbelievably petty issues but all of them were important to one or both of the parties. An example cited with amusement among Americans was Israel's insistence that the Anglicized Arabic term "Gulf of Aquaba" be rendered "Gulf of Elat" in the Hebrew version of one of the annexes. The Egyptians objected, then agreed.

Carter assured Begin and Sadat in attached letters

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Correspondence

The president and the media

To the editors:

I am disturbed—not about the events abroad so much as about the media's attitude toward them and about their disposition to run President Carter down.

We don't need a hard or hard-boiled president. We need one who can gain good will and dispel the image of the overbearing and hateful American. And President Carter is good at that. Notice how he inspired Sadat and Begin, and how he won over Lopez Portillo after a bad beginning? In the present troubled situation I like the way the president hasn't gone off half-cocked. I find his low key approach reassuring. He makes me feel *safe*.

Who are those who are uneasy about his performance? Reporters and commentators, I suspect, who seem to enjoy keeping things stirred up. I'm not worrying about being a "doormat." What right have we to dominate other nations? To be friendly and helpful, yes, but domineering, no. Why emulate the gunboat diplomacy of the past? Is our past record in dealing with other nations all that good? Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon—all are branded with Vietnam.

If you gentlemen of the press want to see the source of the uneasiness of the populace I think you need only look in the mirror. You have tremendous influence; most people believe what they read. Can you expect the world to have respect for a man you habitually disparage? "What in the world to do?" (*TNR*, March 3). Begin building some of that respect we need by emphasizing the president's courage, poise, decency, caution, restraint, fairness and other excellencies. Forget the jingoistic attitude of the past and point toward a future of international cooperation and equality of treatment of the third world. Don't expect a stereotypical belligerent presidential reaction to events. Look for something different—and I think better.

Pearl J. Minor
Iowa City, Iowa

The nation's largest school

To the editors:

I read with considerable interest George Kannar's March 10 article, "Sears Shall Overcome." Kannar poked fun at the recent suit filed by Sears against 10 different federal agencies. In reading the 57-page civil complaint filed by Sears, I see that it is alleged that the United States government ". . . created an imbalanced workforce" largely through inducting or coaxing men into the military and then providing them with GI Bill benefits upon their discharge.

Incredibly, the Sears people give the example of "Project 100,000" whose purpose, Sears claims, " . . . was to educate inductees and enlisted personnel and, in effect, to more formally turn the Army into the nation's largest school." Now Sears people can believe whatever they want, but Project 100,000 was set up in 1966 when manpower needs in Vietnam were greatly increasing—particularly for slots in the infantry and other combat arms, and people were not enlisting for those slots anymore. So the Army had to fill them with draftees. Under Project 100,000 the mental and physical standards were lowered so that, for the first time, men with intelligence test scores between the 10th and 30th percentiles were acceptable.

A very high percentage of these soldiers were blacks. A very high percentage went into the infantry and Vietnam—like 30 percent to 40 percent and, yes folks, a very high percentage were killed. And, as the ground war wound down, the Army closed this "school" out for good.

Dean K. Phillips
101st Airborne Division
Vietnam 1967-1968

Art museums for the populace

To the editors:

John Canaday's article on Karl E. Meyer's *The Art Museum: Power, Money, Ethics* (*TNR*, March 3) contains many truths about the current philosophy of American art museums, but it becomes offensively superior when Mr. Canaday complains of "having to carry a periscope and wear protective football gear" nowadays when he wishes to view a masterpiece.

In his exhilaration that "populist" is becoming a dirty word, and "elitism" has ceased to be one, Mr. Canaday has forgotten that real and true dangers exist in the latter as well as the former. And as Mr. Canaday is well aware, there are already enough works of art in private collections to which he is not entitled to bring his notebook.

By the way, I am enchanted with your magazine. It seems now I must have been searching a long time for it, for the discovery has been particularly sweet.

Angela McAlister
Chicago, Illinois

Involuntary servitude

To the editors:

As another male of draft age, I read with interest S.C.'s Washington Diarist musings on the possibility of a renewal of compulsory national service (*TNR*, March 3). While I am certainly against a peacetime draft of any kind and do not eagerly look forward to being shipped off to the next police action, I find that I must disagree with S.C.'s conclusions about the state's right to compel service in time of war. When war is declared, ostensibly by the people through our representatives, it is a state of affairs that touches every aspect of society. One cannot ignore the war, or choose not to be affected by it. Everyone is morally obligated to either support the war (and that includes fighting, if necessary) or to protest against it. To do neither is to ignore one's obligation to the state while reaping the benefits of being a part of it. I fear that, in effect, S.C. would condemn farm boys, the sons of factory workers, and the unemployed to death while *TNR* readers stayed home.

The problem is defining the point beyond which involuntary servitude begins. I do not profess to know that point, but while I feel that a peacetime draft is certainly beyond it, a wartime one is not.

Kevin Thornton
New Haven, Connecticut

Pop music

To the editors:

Congratulations on the new Jim Miller pop music column (*TNR*, March 24). It's the best writing I've seen in that field for a long time.

Nat Hentoff
New York, New York

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that "in the event of an actual or threatened violation of the treaty," the US would "consult with the parties" and at the request of either party "take such other action as it may deem appropriate." That should have been enough. The Israelis insisted on stronger assurances, in terms implying that any violation would be Egypt's doing. Rightly in my opinion, Sadat objected that the resultant memorandum of understanding between the US and Israel "cast grave doubts" on US intentions and "could be construed as an eventual alliance" against Egypt. The dispute didn't wreck the treaty but it's the sort of thing that could wreck it later.

Moshe Dayan, Israel's foreign minister, said on US television the day before signing that he'd oppose the signing if two issues, guaranteed Israeli access to oil from wells in the Sinai desert and the date of exchange of Israeli and Egyptian ambassadors, were not settled to Israel's satisfaction. Israel wanted to retain possession of the Sinai wells for nine months. It settled for seven months instead of the six months offered by Egypt. Israel wanted a guarantee that it would continue to get at least as much oil from the wells as it has pumped for itself since it developed the wells after seizing the Sinai peninsula in the 1967 war. It settled at US insistence for nothing more than the same bidding rights to Sinai oil that other buyers have and for a US guarantee to sell (not give) Israel any oil that it needs and can't get elsewhere for 15 years. Sadat started much of the last haggling in December when he said he wouldn't exchange ambassadors with Israel—a matter of great symbolic importance to the Israelis—until Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai is completed three years after the treaty takes effect. Carter persuaded him to exchange ambassadors nine months after the treaty becomes effective, at the end of the first "interim" stage of Sinai withdrawal.

Additional military and economic aid for Israel and Egypt—"the price of peace," it was called—over the next three years will come to around five billion dollars. White House and State Department officials did a poor job of preparing the public for it. During Carter's visits to Cairo and Jerusalem, the officials dangled the prospects of more aid before both governments if they agreed on a treaty and thus qualified for it in "a context of peace." Carter spoke of additional assistance ranging up to five billion dollars over three years without the qualifying explanation that his White House assistants and State Department officials were soon urging the press to report. The qualifier is that if all goes as the administration plans and hopes, only $1.4 billion of the five billion dollars or so will have to be appropriated. The rest will be provided in the form of private credits for military arms sales. This assumes that Congress will not "forgive" Israel half the cost of the weaponry it buys on credit, as it has done for years. If Congress requires US payment for half the added Israeli military purchases, the budgeted and appropriated cost of the increased aid will at least double to three billion dollars or more. Israeli officials have been told that the administration will for the first time urge Congress *not* to forgive half the cost. Both Sadat and Begin, visiting the Senate and House foreign affairs committees after the treaty was signed, made unabashed pitches for the US equipping their countries to withstand Soviet incursions in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf and to replace the overthrown Iranian government as a pro-Western bulwark. They had every right to make the pitch, Carter and his spokesmen having privately invited them to do so during Carter's recent trip.

A post-signing cliché is that the treaty and the actual chances of lasting peace between Israel and Egypt may turn upon their ability and willingness to negotiate, with US participation, the "full autonomy" and the "elected self-governing authority" for the Arab inhabitants of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip that were envisioned—though not quite *promised*—in the Camp David "frameworks" announced with so much hope and fanfare last September 17. A joint letter to Carter from Begin and Sadat, dated March 26 and attached to the treaty, reaffirms the Camp David frameworks and promises that "Israel and Egypt will proceed with those provisions relating to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip." The procedure is speeded up a little and made more explicit. Otherwise, the written commitment stands as it did at Camp David. The commitment to "full autonomy" and "self-governing authority" was at Camp David and still is only for "the inhabitants," not for the territories as such.

This in my opinion does not excuse Begin's and other Israelis' belligerent assertions of intent to retain control of every conquered inch of the West Bank and to establish new Israeli settlements, with the sure effect of discouraging any confidence among West Bank Palestinians that genuine autonomy, much less genuine self government, is really in prospect. But the Camp David and current language does formalize—in a sense legalize—the Israeli position. Begin is claiming nothing now that he didn't claim at and after Camp David. Another point needs to be made. The commitment was and still is at least to attempt negotiation of "full autonomy" and an "elected self-governing authority" for the inhabitants of the West Bank *and* the Gaza Strip. Sadat suggested last December that if negotiating the whole package proved impossible for a while, maybe autonomy and some sort of authority for the 400,000 Arabs in the Gaza Strip could be negotiated initially and separately. The Israelis agreed to try it if necessary. But that will be attempted only after first trying to negotiate the terms of autonomy and self-

Staff Addition:

With this issue, Paul Fussell joins *The New Republic* as a contributing editor. Fussell is John DeWitt professor of English at Rutgers, and the author of the National Book Award winner *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford).

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governing authority for both the West Bank and Gaza.

Carter at the treaty dinner quoted King Solomon, son of David, by way of hoping "that now will come a time to heal, a time to plant, a time to build up, a time to laugh, a time to dance, a time to embrace, a time to love." The President added: "We pray to God that at last the children of Abraham have come to a time of peace." A lot of them, including some of the Israeli children, don't seem ready for peace or love. They'll be hearing from our Jimmy.

John Osborne

On the Hill

Insecurity

One of the great pressing concerns of the current Congress is supposed to be Social Security. Talking to Hill aides, one hears four repeated themes: a) their bosses are deeply worried about Social Security; b) they are fearful that the taxes supporting the system have gone too high; c) they are concerned that despite the higher taxes, the Social Security fund could still go broke one day; and d) they are working ever so hard to come up with a reasonable, equitable and workable solution. Given this high level of congressional concern, you would think that when Jimmy Carter proposed small changes that would save about $519 million in Social Security payments this year, and about $1.7 billion next year, he would be roundly applauded and his proposals would be quickly enacted into law. Right? Of course not, for reasons that have more to do with the state of the 96th Congress than they do with the merits of Carter's plan.

Back in January, along with the rest of his proposed budget for fiscal 1980, Carter sent Congress about a dozen planned cuts in Social Security benefits. This was not the administration's final word on Social Security—the cuts would not by themselves bail out what is now a $128-billion program, nor would they permit a decrease in the Social Security tax rate—but they were first steps that seemed to Carter at once obvious, right and relatively simple. And they would save the government a little money as well.

What Carter wanted to do was cut out a few unnecessary or excessively generous benefits. He wanted, for instance, to get rid of the lump-sum death benefit of $255 that is now paid indiscriminately to survivors of all Social Security recipients. The money is supposed to defray funeral costs, so Carter proposed instead that such fees go only to people who really needed the money to pay for funerals (and that it be paid out of Supplemental Security Income—an income supplement program for the poor). This would save about $200 million.

Another big savings ($162 million) was supposed to come from eliminating the college student benefit that is given to children of Social Security recipients, again regardless of need. Again, Carter wanted to stop paying the money to children who don't need it, and give it to those who do through one or another of the federal student assistance programs.

A third area where Carter saw a chance to make a big cut ($62 million) was the elimination of the Social Security minimum payment. Social Security now pays a minimum of $122 a month to people who have paid into the Social Security system at any time during their lives, even if they have not paid enough in to have qualified for $122 a month. The original idea behind the minimum payment is the obvious one: poorer people who never had held steady jobs or made much money at them, and therefore hadn't qualified to get very much from Social Security, would receive at least this "minimum" amount. In fact, thanks to SSI, the poor now receive a good deal more than the Social Security minimum, and so this requirement doesn't do a thing for them anymore. The main beneficiaries of the minimum payment today are federal employees. Their federal salaries are exempt from the Social Security tax; instead, they have their own generous pension plan. But by working, say, part-time for a few years after retirement, they become eligible for $122 a month in Social Security on top of their pensions. Federal employees have vehemently resisted being forced to join the Social Security system, but at last count almost half of federal pensioners were collecting Social Security anyway.

The rest of Carter's proposals were similarly sensible, yet when the House Ways and Means Committee met to consider them in early March, all were quickly put aside for another day. Ways and Means members know perfectly well that changes are going to have to be made—and soon—to save Social Security. Two years ago, Congress swallowed hard and passed the big hike in taxes because the Social Security fund was demonstrably going broke. That has managed to plug the dike for now, but there is a fear, backed up by reams of statistics, that this is not going to hold back the flood forever.

For one thing, Congress is desperate to cancel some of that Social Security tax hike before Americans feel the full brunt of it. This year, the rise will mean that Americans who earn $10,000 will see their Social Security taxes go up by only eight dollars. (For people earning 20,000, the rise is $155 and for people earning over $29,700 it is $332.) In 1981, however, that same $10,000 wage-earner will see his Social Security tax climb an additional $52 ($104 and $387 respectively, for people in the higher wage categories).

The larger problem is that as America grows older, even this increase won't be enough to keep the Social

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Security fund from running out of money. Where there were once six working people supporting each retiree, the ratio is now three to one. Most estimates figure that by the year 2015, when the ratio has narrowed even further, Social Security will again start feeling a substantial strain. No one believes anymore that Social Security is an insurance program, since it is so obvious that working people are paying to support not their own retirement but the retirement of others. The conventional wisdom on the Hill has it that as the years go by, as fewer working people are supporting an ever-rising number of retirees, those who are working won't be willing anymore to keep paying quietly and meekly.

Ways and Means Committee members offer two excuses for putting aside Carter's modest cuts: the press of the budget deadline, and the proposal's lack of so-called "comprehensiveness." Ever since Congress established budget committees a few years ago, all House committees have had to turn in their federal spending proposals to the budget boys by March 15. Since the Carter Social Security cuts were first discussed March 7, there was not enough time, aides say, to give them much thought.

There may be some merit in this reason, but there is none in the comprehensiveness excuse. Since Social Security needs so much work, and since there are so many different proposals floating around, the Ways and Means Committee has decided that it has to do a "comprehensive" revision of Social Security—hold a lengthy set of hearings, thrash out all the issues, and come up with the most far-reaching answer possible. Carter's proposals were just piecemeal, they said, and Congress must look at the big picture. This, mind you, is the same Ways and Means committee that took Carter's "comprehensive" tax reform plan and chopped it into little bits and pieces until it was unrecognizable. In Carter's first year as president, when he sent up "comprehensive" plans for tax reform, welfare reform, energy, etc., he was accused by legislators and the press, old Washington hands, of being naive, of not understanding that progress in Congress occurs by tiny steps. Now, when he proposes a few tiny steps, he is told his proposal lacks "comprehensiveness." He cannot be blamed for suspecting that Congress lacks the backbone to take any steps at all.

The real reason the cuts were set aside, of course, is that this Congress is no more willing to cut benefits—even unnecessary benefits—than the last Congress. Legislators are indisposed to do so if it threatens to evoke the slightest "ouch." Cutting benefits makes constituents mad, it loses votes, it means having to answer all that angry mail. It means staring down the special interest groups that will be affected. And sure enough, no sooner did Carter announce his proposal in January than the affected special interests uniformly started screaming. The federal employees union called it an outrage and promised to pull out all the stops in fighting it. All of the retired persons associations began letter-writing campaigns. And more than 100 groups opposing the cuts formed one monster special interest group called "Save Our Security"—"SOS" for short.

Representative Andy Jacobs, a member of the Ways and Means Committee who says he supports the Carter cuts, blamed Carter for the committee's failure to even seriously consider them. "What he should be doing," Jacobs said, "is selling these cuts to the American people. He and Joe Califano should be going on television and explaining what they will do and why they are needed. *They* are going to have to sell the big changes in Social Security."

But why? Why is it that Carter has to be the one to face the criticism, to take on the special interests, to corral public support, while Congress is allowed to decide every issue by putting its collective finger to the wind? Under current congressional standards, it seems, it is not enough that a legislative proposal be sensible—or even, as in this case, inevitable. There must be pressure manufactured in its favor at least equal to the pressure that is manufactured in opposition. Leadership and public education need not be expected, even when something as basic as Social Security is at stake.

And in the meantime, most of us will continue to wonder whether there will be anything left in the Social Security system when we are old enough to begin collecting.

Joseph Nocera

Joseph Nocera is an editor of the *Washington Monthly.*

The wonderful world of special assistants.

Protégé Power

Even if you've never heard of such a thing as a special assistant, you probably have seen one or two of them. When a cabinet secretary or some other great man of government is shown on the evening news testifying before a congressional committee, you usually can see an earnest-looking and well-turned-out young man or woman positioned behind and slightly to the right of him, who whispers in his ear or passes a note every now and then. That's his special assistant. When, on the front page of your newspaper, you see a picture of an American official being shown around a factory in some foreign land and, again behind and slightly to the right strides a purposeful young person, that also is the special assistant. When photographers are allowed into Cabinet meetings at the White House, the pictures

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show the secretaries of the departments arrayed around a table, and an outer ring of special assistants sitting against the walls of the room.

A special assistant is generally someone between the ages of 25 and 35, intelligent and impeccably credentialed, whose job it is to work closely by the side of an important person—usually in government, and if not in government usually in Washington. The special assistant works a few short steps from the office of what he calls "the principal," or even, if he's as lucky as Alfred Kahn's special assistant, in the very same room. He usually sees the great man all day; inspects all incoming papers; writes speeches and testimony; relays information to and from the bureaucracy and the White House; and accompanies the great man on trips. The special assistant may get to be the architect of an earth-shattering new policy. He may also get to pick up the great man's suit at the cleaner's. He may do both in the course of the same long day. The special assistant need not be called a special assistant, and not everyone with the title of special assistant is really a special assistant. The real article is not a member of the civil service, does not have any single specific area of responsibility, and does not command a large staff of his own. His power and prestige, which can be considerable, come solely from proximity and access to, and influence upon, the boss. A real special assistantship is not a permanent job, but just a brief stop of a year or two along the route of a successful career.

What may not be obvious from the foregoing description, and the reason Washington special assistant jobs are particularly noteworthy, is that these jobs are terribly sought after. People will beg, wheedle, scheme for years to get them. And the people who do this aren't just anyone: they're Rhodes Scholars, law review editors, Supreme Court clerks, the best young people around by the standards of the meritocracy. "If you asked me to name the 12 brightest young people in Washington," says one ardent special assistant-watcher, "about eight of them would be special assistants, handpicked personal aides to a high official. They are sort of an elite corps. You look at their resumes and it boggles your mind." Special assistantdom appeals not just to natural-born sycophants, but to the most promising young people in America. This says something about those people and the paths our society sets before them. Their great ambition is fulfilled by being second banana, and without doing anything under their own name they can rise, yea, unto the point where they have their own special assistants.

Like private clubs and men's bikini underwear, special assistantdom is exhaustively discussed and deeply understood by those who are already in on it, and invisible to the rest of the world. A special assistant's most embarrassing moments often come on trips out of Washington, where people don't understand how important he is. Once James Thomson, now curator of the Nieman Foundation at Harvard but earlier in life a special assistant to Chester Bowles, then undersecretary of state, accompanied Bowles to a political dinner somewhere in the Midwest. The master of ceremonies gave Bowles a florid introduction, and then said he would also like to introduce a very bright and able young man, Jim Thomson, who was Mr. Bowles's secretary. Thomson, mortified, whispered to the MC, "assistant, assistant." "I'm sorry, ladies and gentlemen," the man said. "Jim is Mr. Bowles's assistant secretary."

Generally, it's those familiar with the ways of the Eastern establishment who know about special assistants. Bert Lance, for example, was the only member of President Carter's cabinet who didn't hire a special assistant. At the opposite extreme Joseph Califano (himself once special assistant to Cyrus Vance when Vance was secretary of the Army) immediately hired one executive assistant (Ben Heineman, of Harvard, Oxford, Yale Law School, and the United States Supreme Court, the possessor of the best resume in America) and a slew of special assistants.

Fortunately for ambitious young people, most new government officials aren't Bert Lance. Martin Kaplan, formerly special assistant to Ernest L. Boyer, the commissioner of education (and now a special assistant to Vice President Mondale) remembers getting a call from Boyer just after Boyer was appointed to the Carter administration. The two had met at the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies, and had written a book together. "He told me everyone in Washington seemed to have a someone," Kaplan says, "and would I be his someone?" Both men were much-fellowshipped and well-credentialed, and, proving that similar backgrounds make the best matches, they worked fruitfully together.

Other pairings haven't worked out as well. Consider the sad case of a young man we'll call John. Because he's currently looking for a new special assistantship, he made me sign an affidavit pledging to keep him anonymous. Despite a stellar college record, a prestigious fellowship, and high-powered performance at a top law school, John, like most Americans, spent his early years in blissful ignorance of the existence of special assistants. Then, during his summer stint at a Washington law firm, a young lawyer took John aside and had a man-to-man talk about the logical next step. John decided that after law school he would become a special assistant. So he went to an assistant secretary of a cabinet department and asked to be his special assistant. What's that? said the assistant secretary, who, it should be said, went to a state school and is the kind of man who has a *Who's Who* listing but an extremely brief one. John explained, and the assistant secretary decided to give it a whirl.

The problem was that the assistant secretary, while intelligent and capable, didn't know *how* to have a special assistant. He wanted to see all memos addressed to him

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rather than letting John screen them first. John was spared both the highs and the lows of the job, and put to work rewriting speeches and testimony. In short, it was an ordinary staff job, not a special assistantship. John says frankly, "I'd be willing to carry my boss's briefcase next time, if he'd also let me represent him at high-level meetings."

Those who feel that this great nation was built by rugged pioneers and self-reliant farmers and independent businessmen may bridle a bit at the idea that its fate will soon be in the hands of people who have special assistanted their way to the top. But in fact, a mentor-and-protégé system of upward mobility is an American tradition. In Horatio Alger's novels, the poor boy made good not just by luck and pluck, but also through the friendship of a kindly capitalist father figure. Tom Sawyer had something of the special assistant in him, and was obviously going places; Huck Finn didn't, and wasn't.

The 19th-century equivalent of the special assistant was the stenographer, who in those days was usually a man who intended to rise above his original rank. John Hay, later secretary of state, got his start in politics as secretary to Abraham Lincoln. Theodore Roosevelt had a male secretary, George Cortelyou, who was a lawyer but had come to Washington as "stenographer to President Cleveland." But in the 1920s and 1930s, as the telephone and the typewriter increased the clerical requirements of great men, the traditional secretary's job split in two: the modern "secretary," a dead-end typing, filing and phoning job for women; and the "assistant," an upwardly mobile hero-worshiping and policymaking job for men. In recent years special assistantships have opened up to women, too, and good secretaries have become harder than ever to find.

Probably the earliest prototype of the modern-day Washington special assistant was the Supreme Court clerk. This job had all the essential elements: great man (Supreme Court justice) handpicks promising young man (an editor of one of the Ivy League law reviews) who works closely by his side for a limited period (one or two years) in order to learn about life at the top and get a wonderful credential. Like all special assistants, Supreme Court clerks generally aspire to hold the principal's job some day, though on the current Court there are only two former clerks, William Rehnquist and Byron White.

Now the institution has spread to the point where virtually everyone in government at the deputy assistant secretary level or above has at least one special assistant. So do some prominent businessmen, particularly those with some Washington experience, like Robert V. Roosa of Brown Brothers Harriman and George Ball of Lehman Brothers Kuhn Loeb. When Michael Blumenthal, a man of Washington, was chairman of the Bendix Corporation, he had a special assistant; but when Blumenthal left for the Treasury, his successor tried having a special assistant for a while and then dispensed with it. Eminent men of the press in Washington also sometimes have special assistants. James Reston hired his first in the 1950s after Felix Frankfurter told him over lunch one day how great it was to have one. Now David Broder and Hugh Sidey have them too. Supreme Court justices used to have one clerk each; now some have as many as four.

So far as all these great men are concerned, having a special assistant is appealing because it's lonely at the top. The bureaucracy is huge and uncontrollable. The political appointees with line authority become brainwashed by the civil servants under them and turn into special pleaders for their programs. Memos and phone calls stream in. Small fires break out. It's impossible to keep up on every detail and every interest group. The special assistant, as the only official in the department who is totally loyal to the boss, can help with these problems; he can be counted on to tell the truth and to carry out orders without putting any of his own spin on the ball. From the special assistant's point of view, the job is a chance to see policy being made and to have at least some influence at a level far above that to which a person in his late 20s ordinarily could aspire.

That constitutes the practical case for special assistantdom. But it's only part of the reason why the institution's so widespread. These are practical disadvantages too. Special assistants are usually hated by the rest of the people in the department, who regard them as scheming and officious young punks shielding the boss from the truth. When Philip Heymann became head of the Justice Department's criminal division, he commissioned an efficiency study that recommended the abolition of special assistantships for this reason. But Heymann immediately hired five special assistants. This suggests that there are powerful psychological forces sustaining the institution as well.

For the boss, a special assistant is a status symbol. It impresses others that one has a bright young lawyer half a step behind and slightly to the right at all times. Perhaps more important, it impresses the boss himself. He can think, by God, I must be pretty good if I can have a Supreme Court clerk at my beck and call. He can pride himself on helping along someone promising, in addition to promoting his own career. He can feel in touch with the younger generation, sharp and critical as it can be. He can tell himself, this fine upstanding special assistant of mine kind of reminds me of myself when I was young.

As for the special assistant, his ardor for the job is a triumph over its many drawbacks. Even the most enthusiastic special assistant will admit that the excitement of the work comes at the price of some degree of sycophancy. There are those moments on trips out of town of having to check the principal's bags and whisper in his ear that it's time to move on to the next appointment. There are the bosses (William O. Douglas being a well-known example) who can turn the

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most pop-eyed admirers into sullen rebels in a year's time. There are the stories of people who stayed in special-assistant-type jobs for too long and, somewhere along the way, got a reputation for being, well, very sound but not really the kind of person you'd consider for a job requiring *leadership*.

Special assistants nevertheless enthusiastically assist because it's the natural outgrowth of their experience in life to date. By and large, they believe in large institutions and great men—after all, large institutions and great men have smiled on them so far. Through the years, these young people have developed an odd combination of the self-assertion necessary to get a special assistantship and the self-effacement necessary to excel in one. Most of the special assistants I talked to gave their bosses boffo reviews: "a real pleasure . . . unassuming . . . humor . . . great strength" (Terry Adamson on Griffin Bell); "a great man" (John Kester on Harold Brown); "a master craftsman . . . an ace . . . brilliant . . . the best guy around" (Jim Brooke on James Reston).

More than that, special assistants have often built their lives around accumulating extremely impressive credentials, rather than doing any particular thing well. This opens up wonderful opportunities, of course, but at the same time entraps people. Someone who has been a Rhodes Scholar, a law review editor and a Supreme Court clerk very likely has little interest in the one activity he has been specifically trained for, the practice of law. So once he has run the gauntlet through a clerkship, he often wants to put off joining a firm and settling in, but to do so in a way that will keep his credentials sterling and not close off any options. So a special assistantship is, for him, a wonderful opportunity—he learns a lot, he adds luster to his resume, he commits no more than a couple of years of his life, he makes valuable contacts, and he can continue to agonize over the choice between law and journalism, teaching and business, government service and investment banking.

Thus in Washington there is a sizable population of some of the most talented people in the country, who spend many of their most productive years in a series of one- or two-year billets in prestigious government jobs. To really accomplish anything—and these are people who are genuinely capable of accomplishment—would take longer than that. But to stay more than two years would mean closing off options, getting all the possible resume value from one job and passing up the opportunity for the further resume value that would come from taking another one. The culture these people live in specifically guarantees that they won't accomplish all that they could.

In most places, somebody who switched jobs every two years would be suspected of having a drinking problem. But in Washington, if a promising young person doesn't switch jobs every two years, his friends become concerned and potential employers get suspicious. They begin to think what a shame it is that he hasn't lived up to early expectations. They wonder: has he become one of those fellows who hides a bottle in his desk drawer?

Nicholas Lemann

Nicholas Lemann is an associate editor of *Texas Monthly* and a contributing editor of the *Washington Monthly*.

Relativity for the working press.

Einstein Made Easy

The Einstein theory is easy to understand if you apply yourself. I journeyed to Princeton in 1953 where the great professor had a press conference, and prepared myself for it with a 35-cent paperback, *The Universe and Dr. Einstein* by Lincoln Barnett. It seemed easy as I studied a graph in this little book showing "the westbound run of a New York-Chicago express pictured in a two-dimensional space-time continuum." The train was starting up from the middle of page 75 and heading for the upper right-hand corner at an angle of 90 degrees, and the rear had passed Albany at 9 p.m. and the front was just coming into Toledo at 2 a.m. the next day. There was lots of smoke from the engine. In recent days *Time* and *Newsweek* have been publishing similar helpful charts to help celebrate Einstein's centenary. A lot of people, I fear, will go away baffled.

For the purposes of the interview, Professor Einstein did not appear sockless, in keeping with his legend. Nor did he wear his usual open-throat sweatshirt and Breton sweater. He was dressed in a baggy gray suit with necktie. It was his 74th birthday and Yeshiva University of New York was announcing a new medical college named after him and launching a major fund-raising drive. All sorts of functionaries—academics, publicity men, cameramen and politicians—were on hand, milling about a frail, kindly, moustached, lonely-looking old man whose long white hair stood up on end as though startled by the ideas emanating at its roots or, perhaps, caught by an electro-gravitational impulse. Einstein was trying to oblige. Cameramen jet-dived at him, reporters shouted questions about relativity and politics, university officials cuddled close to get into the photos and Einstein, in a low voice with strong accent, spoke his piece for the motion pictures. Because of his health he was not supposed to be on his feet very long, and there were enough excitable officials around, demanding calmness and quiet, to panic a light wave.

Strongly fortified with my Albany-Toledo train continuum, I waited while the ruck of reporters asked

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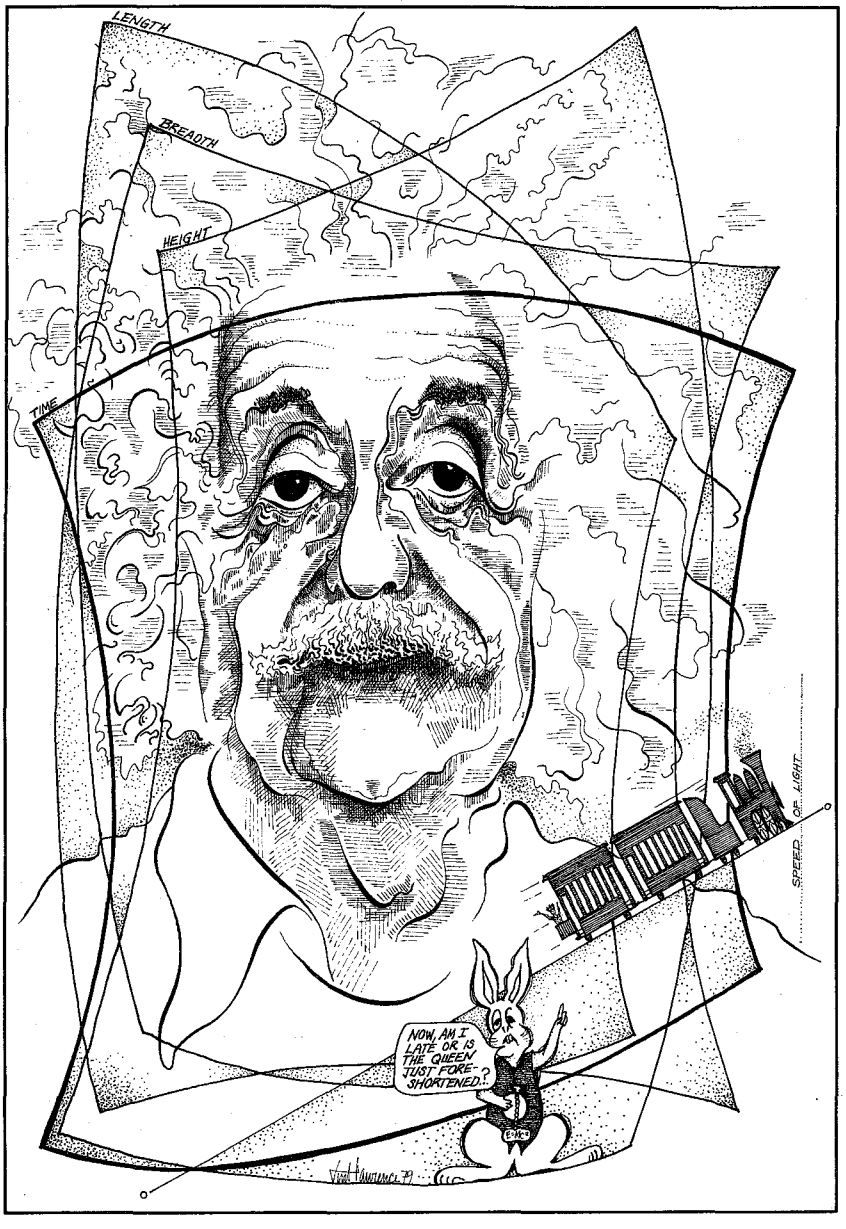

drawing by Vint Lawrence

their questions and then I inquired knowingly, "How are you coming with your universal field theory, professor?" He brightened at once, and replied with quiet eagerness. Others looked on admiringly. Later, reporters pooled what we thought he had answered, looking to each other for confirmation on the strange words, and we published the result in the papers.

The problem was about the unified field theory and how to explain it. This problem still persists. I noticed this month a lively diagram in *Time* showing a little man shooting off from the earth at the velocity of light, with his head dangerously flattened; and a picturegraph in *Newsweek* explaining "How Black Holes Work." It all sounds simple enough as you look at it and read it. You wish Einstein were there to explain it himself as he did that day at Princeton. Maybe you wouldn't have understood even then. Forces inside the atom are governed by electromagnetism. The spheres and whirling globes and nebulae are governed by a second primary force—gravitation. Einstein tried to put these together. At age 26 in 1905, as a patent office examiner in Berne, he astonished the world by broadening Max Planck's "quantum theory" to include all radiant energy—light, heat, X-rays and so on. That took care of the atom. Then he came through with his general theory of relativity, and that took care of stars and planets, and space, time and gravitation.

The great man addressed his explanation at the press conference to me because I had asked the sophisticated question. He perched his glasses down the bridge of a long nose and looked out with an ingratiating, elfin glance of shy appeal. As Einstein tried to shout answers at us, kindly wrinkles radiated from his brown eyes. Some questions were political and his answers made him seem more at home inside the atom than in Eisenhower's Washington, where McCarthy had just denounced him as dangerous. He was, of course, foreign born. Also a pacifist. Certainly his scientific views were "radical."

Einstein postulated that matter and energy are interchangeable, that mass is simply concentrated energy (theoretical basis of the A-bomb). He said that light isn't a continuous stream of energy but is bunched in bundles—or "quanta"—of photons (the theoretical basis for TV and the photoelectric cell). Reporters scribbled it all down, abbreviating the hard words. Einstein didn't try to explain some of it to us; he skipped the part about gravitation not being what Newton thought it was: the mass of a moving body, you see, isn't constant but increases with velocity. Light is energy and interchangeable with matter; matter in motion bends as it passes through a gravitational field, so light will bend, too. Astronomers proved this in an eclipse at the equator in 1919. (This led Einstein to the odd little observation that space is curved, and that a sunbeam dancing off at 186,000 miles a second will curve back on itself and return after 200 billion terrestrial years.)

We were an anxious group of reporters as the photographers finally took over the Einstein show and we held our news huddle. Had he said something important? we asked each other. I mean, Really IMPORTANT? Most of us could handle the story if we stuck to familiar images, mostly about speeding cars and railroad trains. I had my space-time train, running from New York to Toledo, but others, it appeared, were going to hazard a cosmic elevator, running straight up, at the speed of light, of course. "What is the speed of light?" a fellow journalist asked me and I obliged him out of my invaluable paperback. On page 95 the book asked the reader to suppose that "some roving

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interstellar gunman fires a bullet at the elevator." Anything can happen on these illustrative space trips.

Photographers kept asking Einstein for one more picture, and the public relations men kept standing him up and sitting him down in a space-time continuum. He looked at them shyly, sweetly, remotely, out of a great solitude. His eyes were those of a faithful Newfoundland, eager to be man's best friend; eyes that could look into space and see it curving back on itself.

But I wasn't satisfied about where he had got on the unified field theory so when I got back to the Princeton Inn I wrote him a letter. He had written to FDR about the atom bomb, hadn't he? I got his answer in Washington the next day. The paper was embossed "A. Einstein, 112 Mercer Street, Princeton, New Jersey, USA," and it ran to about 400 typed words. I had never met him before, nor he me. He apologized for not being more clear in the mass interview but explained that it wouldn't have been appropriate "to enlarge upon a subject that had no connection with that of the ceremony." The problem broke down, he said, into two parts: using mathematics to find "the logically simplest laws compatible with prior knowledge," and second, using mathematics "to draw conclusions from the laws thus found which can be tested by empirical facts."

This sounded reasonable enough. He continued to explain that he had done all right on problem one. "I was able, after many and lenghty [sic] attempts to solve problem 1) in a way which seems to me quite satisfactory." It was problem two that got him down: "I was, however," he explained, "quite unable so far to solve problem 2) because of insurmountable mathematical difficulties. For this reason the theory is—at present—neither confirmed nor disproved." So that was that.

Einstein chatted with me about his problem as though I were a platoon of Nobel prizewinners in physics. He signed the letter "Very sincerely yours, A. Einstein."

Einstein lived two more years and then moved into the never-never realm of mathematical legend, the equal of Copernicus, Galileo and Newton. The world still moves to his $E=mc^2$ guideline. The average man in the street still tries to understand it. He spent the last half of his life seeking the unified field equation that would link gravitation, electromagnetism, time and assorted nuclear forces. He was not satisfied with a random universe and was certain God wasn't satisfied either. Yet he was left, as he wrote to me that day in March, 1953, still "floating . . . as I find myself in the case of the generalized field theory."

Richard Strout

Richard Strout, better known to *New Republic* readers as TRB, is a Washington reporter for the *Christian Science Monitor*.

Don't blame the unions.

Why Labour Toppled

London

Steinbeck writes in *The Grapes of Wrath*: "The ideal act of propaganda consists in identifying your cause with values that are unquestioned." Britain's Tory press has achieved that ideal concerning the two months of industrial disruption that led up to last week's parliamentary vote of no confidence in the Labour government. Almost without exception, labor militance has been portrayed as an attack on Britain and British values. It has been reported that precipitate strikes have been aimed at the sick, the aged, the mentally ill, all in service of self-defeating occupational tribal warfare. At one point it appeared only a matter of time before the press would find some union shop steward willing to pronounce in favor of the seven deadly sins.

As the polls got worse for them, members of Jim Callaghan's cabinet have rushed to condemn "this corruption of traditional trade unionism." Even this year's chairman of the Trade Union Council, Tom Jackson, has pronounced that "the trade union movement has lost its way." This shows an extraordinary loss of nerve by the union leadership and the cabinet, because both know that the strikes have not been as bad as the press has said. The number of working days lost through strikes in January was actually fewer than last year's figure. Predictions that a million would be thrown out of work by the road haulage strike were exaggerated by 900,000. No patient has died as a result of the current selective action in hospitals—indeed the only man to die has been a Transport Workers picket in Scotland who was run over by an employer. Pay settlements in the private sector are averaging less than 10 percent, which is also less than the average for last year.

After a disastrous start to the crisis (returning bronzed from the Guadeloupe summit to chide the nation that they were taking too parochial a view by their obsession with strikes) Callaghan has regained his political sense. The sole aim came to be getting through the first three months of winter, when the big public sector negotiations were clustered, without the country grinding to a halt. This has been achieved. The local government manual workers, standard bearers of the low-paid, have settled for around a nine percent raise. The giant albatross of state capitalism, British Leyland, has drawn back from a strike over parity of payments among plants. The traditionally troublesome miners have been placated with assurances about the future role of coal.

The concordat with the government which the union leaders rushed to sign on St. Valentine's Day is a catalogue of good intentions, high school economics and studiously vague formulations about future pay

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bargaining. Its recommendations on the closed shop, secret ballots before strikes and limitations on picketing were designed to steal Mrs. Thatcher's thunder, not to offer a solution. The basic conflict within the unions over whether they see collective bargaining as a way of reducing income differentials and fostering equality is unresolved.

To outsiders it must look as if Britain never learns from its traumas. The crises of 1967 over the pound, the miners' strikes of 1972 and 1974, the hyper-inflation of 1975 followed thereafter by the public expenditure cuts, all suggest a country resolutely incapable of change. In fact there have been immense changes in the trade union movement during the past decade. Union leaders now are part of government. Ever since their falling out with Harold Wilson in 1969 over his attempts to legislate changes in industrial relations practices, which helped Labour to lose the 1970 election, union leaders have been at pains to cooperate with the Labour party. When Labour was still in opposition, the party and the TUC worked out a detailed blueprint for industrial relations reform and economic policy. Pay restraint was supposed to accompany new laws advancing socialism and boosting union power.

Within months of his return to office in 1974, Wilson was happy to let Michael Foot, then the conscience of the left, set under way a series of industrial relations reforms. But none of these truly challenged private ownership of industry. Foot repealed still-born Tory anti-union legislation, and pushed through new laws providing improved unemployment compensation rights against dismissal, a right to union recognition, paid time off work for union duties, an extension of union immunities from common law restraints when involved in a trade dispute, a repeal of legislation outlawing the closed shop (a reform that many employers welcomed), and better arbitration facilities. Clearly the rights of unions over employers were extended. In return the Labour leadership began to exact a heavy price.

For the past four years the unions have had to stomach an economic policy that is designed to restore company profitability, and changes in tax laws that have undermined Labour's alleged income redistribution policy and benefited the rich. Most painful of all, unions have grudgingly accepted wage restraint for three years at a time of low growth and ever-increasing unemployment.

In 1977, after three years of imposed and apparently fruitless wage restraint, it became clear to union activists that many of the industrial relations reforms for which they were paying so dearly were inadequate. Power had not been substantially transferred from capital to labor. The notorious defeat last year of employee attempts to unionize a small photographic firm called Grunwick in north London, where most of the workers are poorly paid Asian women, came to symbolize the inadequacy of the new labor relations laws. The unions have come to feel that they have given away many of their historic liberties to bargain, and in return have not received sufficient concessions. The promise of laws requiring worker representatives on the boards of companies with more than 2000 employees has not been kept. Unemployment had reached the highest levels recorded since the 1930s, and the Treasury seems to have been converted from Keynesianism to a covert form of monetarism.

At the 1977 and 1978 TUC conferences, the unions declared themselves free of obligations to the government's pay policies and voted for free collective bargaining. But the real challenge to the government did not come until this winter. In 1977 restraint was really abandoned only in the private sector, where the wage index rose 17 percent. In the public sector, covering a third of the total work force, the TUC General Council's refusal to support the firemen's strike in November 1977 ensured that there was no massive challenge to the government's 10 percent limit.

Callaghan should have foreseen that the union leadership could not deliver peace in the public sector for a second year. He made matters worse for himself by misleading union leaders about the timing of the general election. Union leaders were canceling holidays to be in Britain last autumn and felt snubbed when Callaghan revealed that it would not be until 1979. Then he announced a public worker pay raise ceiling of five percent for this year, after approving a 30 percent increase for judges, top civil servants and heads of the nationalized industries. A widely publicized report showed middle management has contrived a series of devices to get around the government's incomes policy. Their average increase, thanks to company cars, expenses and job regrading, was over 13 percent.

Perhaps stronger union leaders could have saved the government's skin, but a political vacuum developed last autumn at the top of the TUC. With the retirement of Hugh Scanlon of the engineers and Jack Jones of the Transport Workers, two inexperienced and less intelligent replacements were thrust onto the political stage. Neither Moss Evans nor Terry Duffy had the authority to smother rank-and-file revolt.

There is a coherent left-wing argument against an incomes policy, based on the proposition that there should not be restraint or planning of wages until there is full-blooded planning of profits and investment as well. Most trade union leaders don't really want state control of all British industry. But they will not be able

Coming:

How the Kennedy School is Destroying Government.

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to sell wage restraint and industrial peace to their membership unless we produce a better—and that means more equitable—incomes policy than we have in the past.

Patrick Wintour

Patrick Wintour writes for the *New Statesman*.

Even full Arab-Israeli peace will not solve all our problems in the Mideast.

After the Treaty

London

Despite doubts expressed after the fact about the value of President Carter's achievement in the Middle East, it's still clear that a genuine peace between Egypt and Israel is the most promising way of liquidating the whole Arab-Israeli conflict. Without Egypt, Israel's other neighbors can hardly hope to destroy Israel, or even compel it to do their will. With the passage of time the conflict that has now lasted over 30 years might, even with no formal settlement, become obsolete.

But this assumes real peace between Egypt and Israel. Such a peace requires that the two countries treat each other as sovereign states with ordinary conflicts over limited tangible interests—interests that can be defined, circumscribed, compromised and settled. But if other issues loom that cannot be defined and limited, then the peace will be precarious. And there are signs of such a dangerous condition. Egypt has not given up the temptation to champion the Palestinians, and makes noises indicating that it means to negotiate on their behalf. We do not know whether these professions are mere rhetoric designed to extricate Egypt from a predicament that has brought the nation nothing but loss and catastrophe. But if they are more than rhetoric, we are back in the Pan-Arab politics which made the unnecessary war of 1948, and its subsequent perpetuation, inevitable. To that extent, President Carter's achievement will come to seem illusory; and President Sadat and Mr. Begin will have labored in vain to extricate the United States administration from the treacherous bogs of the comprehensive settlement it had pursued for so long.

But assume the peace between Egypt and Israel holds. It will undoubtedly be of great benefit to both countries. But will it necessarily benefit the US, which has engaged its credit in the success of the enterprise, and which will have taken on very large financial and other commitments? There is nothing automatic about this, for US interests in the Mideast go beyond the settlement of the Eygptian-Israeli conflict, and even beyond the settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The main interest of the US is to prevent a Soviet takeover of the Middle East, and to secure the production and transport of oil to Europe, America and Japan. It is easy to imagine how, even after the settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute, conflict and disorder elsewhere in the Middle East will cause the US and its allies problems as acute and as dangerous as the Arab-Israeli dispute has been generally thought to cause.

How can the US and its allies parry such threats? Toward the end of the recent treaty negotiations, some people suggested that the US was particularly anxious for a settlement in order to continue confidently supplying weapons to Egypt, Saudi Arabia and other like-minded states. These weapons presumably are intended to serve as a deterrent against the Soviets and their friends, a deterrent thought to be all the more necessary following the shah's downfall. If any such calculation is being made, then the Egyptian-Israeli settlement will have brought disadvantage instead of advantage. Events in Iran conclusively show that it was a bad blunder to have relied on the shah (jointly with Saudi Arabia) to police the Gulf and form an anti-Soviet shield. Neither Iran nor Saudi Arabia nor any combination of local states can fill a role that properly belongs to a great power. The present troubles in the Middle East are the direct consequence of the disregard of this fundamental principle—of the illusion that what one is not prepared to do for oneself, others will do for one. Only marginally and indirectly does a settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute have any bearing on this central issue. If the issue is not faced, then the great expense of achieving peace may well be wasted. In short, further agreements between Israelis and Arabs are not the most urgent next step.

A US (or a Western) policy for defense against Soviet encroachments in the Middle East is no easy thing to devise. The events in Iran have dealt a great blow to US prestige, and made other states skeptical of US engagements. Whatever effect the new treaty may have on President Carter's popularity in the US, the gesture may not have added to US prestige in the Middle East itself. The president represents a superpower, and a superpower, it would be felt, does not entreat its protégés in the way Carter was seen to do. A superpower should not be seen to make approaches; it should wait for approaches to be made to it. But this kind of difficulty is probably inescapable when a democracy, with all the restless habits of democratic politicians, has to play an imperial role.

But prestige, ultimately, is the emanation of self-assured power. How can the power of a superpower be made manifest in the Middle East? Clearly not by sending a squadron of F-15s to show the flag, nor by tentatively ordering a few ships to sail from the Philippines in the direction of the Gulf. When the Sixth Fleet had things its own way in the Mediterranean, US

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power was manifest, tangible, to be reckoned with. Today, with a Soviet fleet in rivalry, with Malta lost to NATO, with Greece and Turkey disaffected, the base on which power must rest has greatly eroded. And if it has eroded in the Mediterranean, the British withdrawal from Aden and the Gulf means it has almost completely gone from those parts. How to reestablish it is not primarily a question of means; it is more a question of will, pertinacity and adroitness.

When Britain had an empire, it considered (for reasons somewhat different from those obtaining today), that the Middle East and the Mediterranean should not fall into, or be at the mercy of, another great power. It was accepted as a matter of course that this required British sea power to be strong enough that it could be decisively brought to bear whenever the situation made it necessary—whether to defend the Ottoman empire against Russian threats, or to prevent the French from establishing a surrogate empire in the Levant, or to guard against a German threat in the Persian Gulf. It also followed that such sea power required—at the same time as it made possible—the control of bases and strategic key-points: Gibraltar, Malta, Aden, Muscat, Cyprus and—the most substantial of all—Egypt. For the US, too, sea power is a necessity. US strategic doctrine used to be familiar with this point. Is the US in the process of forgetting it, at the very moment when the Soviets, for the first time in Russian history, are learning to use sea power in order to conduct a restless and adventurous *Weltpolitik*?

But even if the point has not been forgotten, or dismissed in favor of some such notion as "fortress America," the conditions the US faces in the Middle East today are more difficult than those faced by Great Britain. The US itself has contributed to these present difficulties, for example, in the policy it followed during the Suez affair of 1956. In any case and for whatever reasons, the whole of the Middle East is likely to remain volatile and disturbed: with radical ideologies running strong; with governments that know their title to legitimacy is open to question and to attack; with endless and complicated quarrels and intrigues. To find a foothold on this quaking, treacherous, unstable ground will tax the agility of the most skilled political operator. It will call for sagacity, which the leaders of a democracy—dependent as they are on votes and opinion polls—will have little incentive to cultivate.

Elie Kedourie

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Those who are bored with space are bored with life.

By Jupiter!

by Henry Fairlie

When we consider what religion is for mankind, and what science is, it is no exaggeration to say that the future course of history depends upon the decision of this generation as to the relations between them.

A. N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, 1925

Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind.

Albert Einstein, 1940

The generation Whitehead was addressing—I was born in the year before he wrote—has all but done its work. But not as he had hoped. In the realm of science, the results have been remarkable; in the realms of religion and philosophy, they have been barren. Science has increasingly turned to religion and philosophy to rescue it from its lameness, to answer the questions it cannot and is not obligated to answer. But religion and philosophy have mostly been content to ignore what science is doing, or to disdain it, and so have remained almost wantonly blind in their own gropings after the truth. This is the greatest lacuna in the life-view with which we approach the end of our century. It affects us all: how we think and feel, and work and play; what we attempt; even, as I hope to show, how we vote. What are we here *for*? What is our duty? We don't know.

Convincing people of the importance of space research is not easy. On the Monday evening when Voyager I flew by Jupiter and its satellites, I wore NASA's own Voyager badge on my arm, and was enchanted when the publisher of this magazine said that it made me look raunchy. A week later a friend at NASA gave me a complete set of the color photographs

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taken by Voyager I. They are breathtaking and beautiful: no other 8 × 10 glossies like them. Even those who have been dull to the exploration of space were amazed, and some of them were even awed. But a day or two later these people were back to earth, mundane again in their concerns, their eyes fixed as nervously as ever on the ground. But these are not the lost souls; they are waiting to be unblinded. As one of them looked at the pictures, he said, "But these have their own aesthetic value."

The lost souls are those who say, always rather brightly, that they are bored with the exploration of space. To these I feel like paraphrasing the remark of Johnson about London: "Those who are bored with space are bored with life." It is difficult to find what they are not bored with. They show slight interest in religion, rarely talk about anything in philosophical terms, and have natures that are unpoetic. They stay on the sidewalks of even their own lives. They remind me of those who say that they are bored by small talk, which makes one wonder when one will ever hear any great talk from them. Yap! Yap! They say that they are bored, because they have to say something, and to say that they are bored seems to be profound. As Jacques Merleau-Ponty says in a book to which I will return, to wonder if one can see the world *itself* "is a philosophical question which does not come naturally to the mind of someone who busies himself in the world and has to deal with things, animals, or people." They have no speaking silence in them.

The spectacular success of Voyager I's fly-by of Jupiter and its satellites—it is now on the way to Saturn, in 10 years to Uranus, and then who knows where it will go?—is not in itself the most significant event of our century. But it is a brilliant confirmation of what is the most significant event. There was justice in the fact that the fly-by of Jupiter took place in the week of the centenary of Einstein's birth. Since he published the general theory of relativity in 1916, science has been on the prowl in our century. It has been a kind of alley cat, out and about in the dark, when most of us are asleep. All that we have had from it are yet more abstract conjectures and calculations, irrefutable in their own terms, which it has seemed impossible to submit to even the experimental method of science. Science has been dealing with things so vast and distant, out there in the universe, or so minute and invisible, inside our own make-up, that we have made no head or tail of it. We want to see—and we are right to want to see—what science is looking at. In the two most obvious fields—space and genetics—we are now beginning to see. As one could have expected, the two are linked. When James Watson and Francis Crick published their classic paper in *Nature* in 1953, elucidating the structure and function of DNA, they contributed not only to our knowledge of our own organisms, not even only to the long inquiry about evolution, but to the discussion of the origins of the universe, which is also part of the concern of the exploration of space.

It is important that we should be able to see what our science is doing. We are right to go on talking about the sun setting and rising, to speak as if it makes its daily journey around us, still to see the sky and the universe as a great dome that we look *up* at. No astronomer since Galileo may have relied only on the naked eye, but our naked eye is the common sense with which we question our science. Even astronomers say to their families, "The sun sets at 7:12 tonight." They do not say that the orbit and rotation of the earth will cause us to lose sight of it at 7:12. Even they see the sun go down below the horizon, swallowed by the earth or sinking into the sea. Something very important begins to happen, therefore, when we can see these great outer planets. For they were discovered as a result of conjecture, of predictions that certain irregularities in the motions of one planet could not be explained except by the existence of another planet. So to have those photographs of Jupiter is reassuring. Our science is not, we can begin to believe, one great game or hoax.

I am arguing that our most everyday perceptions and therefore our day-to-day actions are ruled by our cosmology or our lack of one. Greek philosophy began with speculations about the physical nature of the universe. In order to cope with the questions that were raised, it then had to call logic into being. Once it was thus involved in questions of logic, it had to meet questions about the validity of knowledge. Questions about the nature of knowledge then stirred others about ethics. Once questions about ethics had been raised, political philosophy could not lag far behind. So we have the dialogues of Plato, and the vast system of Aristotle. Wow! as the young would say, just before mellowing out. Neat! The cosmology of Aristotle, refurbished just in time by Aquinas, lasted almost 2000 years. Then it was shattered by Brahe and Galileo, by Kepler and Bruno, by Descartes and Newton. This classical system then lasted for a little more than 200 years, until Einstein crumbled it in his hands because its blooms were already sere. The story is well known. What needs to be emphasized here is that, as long as the Aristotelian or Newtonian syntheses were dominant, they also ruled our attitudes to ethics, and therefore to the expression of our morality in our politics.

This is nowhere more strikingly illustrated than in the *Autobiography* of Calvin Coolidge. His chapter on his education is twice the length of his chapter "On Entering and Leaving the Presidency." Every page of it is worthwhile, but especially the passage in which he describes the influence of George D. Olds, later the president of Amherst:

> *It was under him that we learned of the universal application of the laws of mathematics. We saw the discoveries of Kepler, Descartes, Newton and their associates bringing the entire*

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universe under one law, so that the most distant point of light revealed by the largest reflector marches in harmony with our own planet. We discovered, too, that the same force that rounds a tear-drop holds all the myriad worlds of the universe in a balanced position. We found that we dwelt in the midst of a Unity which was all subject to the same rules of action. My education was making some headway.

I find this passage both instructive and moving. There is a brave nostalgia in its cadences. Only a few years after Einstein had published his general theory, Coolidge was looking back to the harmony and hierarchy of the Newtonian synthesis. Longing for it. Things were fixed. Laws were laws. "My education was making some headway": the conservative knew a conservative world.

Everyone who considers these matters at all knows that our cosmology determines how we perceive ourselves, our place in the universe and therefore why we are here, the ethical injunctions that we will obey and therefore the political action into which we translate them. I do not agree with Eric Voegelin's vast synthesizing of ancient history, simply because I do not believe that history can be reduced to such convenient patterns. But he is right when he says that, when Moses led the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt, he led the human race to freedom. The Egyptians had no real cosmology. As B. J. Kemp, of the faculty of Oriental studies at Cambridge, said recently, "Egyptian theologians seem to have displayed little interest in the details of the creation of the physical world." (Go and look again at the meaningless relics of Tut.) But then came Moses and the rest of the Old Testament and—wham! bam!—man is shoved up against the cosmos and God as personally—and inescapably—as any bunch of talkative tribes could be expected to tolerate.

He had turned mankind forever into a permanent Knesset: no wonder he threatened to send them all back to Egypt. Aquinas understood this all very well, which is why he undertook to rescue the Aristotelian system from too premature a demise. Down with the cosmology would go all social order. The works of Aristotle had only just been rediscovered and, a few years before Aquinas's birth, had been ominously attacked by the Church. Aquinas recognized that both Aristotle and the scriptures had to be reinterpreted. In the 12 volumes of the *Summa Theologica* he undertook this task, and for another 400 years until Newton, all was fixed and peaceable again.

But then Newton clamped the hand of his genius on the universe and on wayward mankind. The world that he described was the world which to Coolidge was safe. Then why were the next two centuries—the *Principia* was published in 1687—years of such tumult and revolution? The fault was not Newton's. It was others who took from his calculations what they thought could be applied as laws to the rest of life. There was perhaps no more brilliant but shallow movement in history than the Enlightenment; there has perhaps been no more brilliant but shallow man in the story of the human mind than Voltaire. For a little more than 200 years, mathematical calculations were transferred to human life. Harmony ought to reign here as it does out there. So from where came the tumult of the age of revolutions? It came from the immediate and furious response of the romantics, to so mechanical a view—at first so majestic and so needed, and then so quickly debased and made misleading and destructive. In our own century we have seen it work itself out, in the most violent and trivial forms of irrationality, as we have waited for our science to cease to be on the prowl. It is my claim that science has now returned to us the possibility of a cosmology, that once again we can freely find ourselves, and our ethics and our politics, under the "dome" of a universe that we can see and understand for ourselves.

So let us come down to our voting: even to the kinds of problems that face a president now, or the behavior of our representatives in a congress or a parliament. It is a long time since I first suggested that, contrary to most descriptions of it, our century has been conservative and even reactionary. The last gasp of Victorianism was 1917: the Russians love Dickens and Balzac, and there is other evidence for this. One reads the history of the Social Democrats and Spartacists in Germany after 1918, and one is in the world of John Stuart Mill and antimacassars. So the 20th century overwhelmed them in uncouth forms against which they had no resistance. To read of a Rosa Luxemburg, great as she was, is to read of a governess. One cannot stand against "flux" in a wimple. It was the Hitlers who felt the "flux"—the breakdown of a cosmology—and knew that it would breed them.

Far be it from me to despise the spirit of a conservatism that is genuine. But I have seen enough of conservatism to know that it can be as mean as hell if it is vulgar or ungenerous. The conservative should so enjoy life that he cannot but welcome all to its feast. The conservatism that I see around me today is mean, not because of any lack of generosity in its motive, but because of a narrowness in its vision. It may swear itself the enemy of Zero Population Growth; it may want to build more factories for Boeing wherever it may be that Henry Jackson seeks his votes, and indeed as many manufactories as George Meany will properly pray for; it may be pitted against the Sierra Club, and want to see more and thriving industries. But this signifies very little. At bottom its view of the universe and therefore of the future is that they are closed. If there is anything that we should be taking from the cosmology that is now available to us, it is that the universe is infinite and that therefore the future is open. It will not be long before the space shuttles are up there, and from then it will not be long, as one serious scientific writer has persuasively envisioned, before most of mankind

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is also out there, returning to the earth as we now go to Athens, in order to see "where it all started." That is the practicality of it; it is in no way what matters.

Whether we regard ourselves as conservatives or liberals or socialists or whatever label we choose, our universe is being returned to us after long centuries in which we have felt divorced from it: man pitted against nature, absurdly as existentialism had it, both the brute and dumb force of nature itself and the cold and hostile representations of nature in the abstractions of our science. This is why the book that I mentioned at the beginning is so interesting. Jacques Merleau-Ponty, as a philosopher, collaborated with Bruno Morando, as an astronomer, to engage in a dialogue, which they call *The Rebirth of Cosmology*. It is not satisfying as a book; dialogues very rarely are, unless one is writing, like Plato, both sides of the argument. Both men are too aware that they are breaking ground. They are not yet on the wings of their vision. Yet their book is important and enriching. It is by far the best attempt that has been made to bridge the gap betweeen our philosophy and our science, certainly much better than the maunderings of a Teilhard de Chardin. One believes that it could not have been written before this decade, before the direct exploration of space had given us a new confidence. When Merleau-Ponty says of the cosmology of the Greeks that it was totally erroneous, but that "it nevertheless carries a kind of permanent truth, in the sense that its economy results from a very subtle adjustment between what the eye sees, what the imagination constructs, and what reason requires," one feels that our philosophy may be ready once more to confront the metaphysical questions about the nature of the universe, from which both existentialism and linguistics in our century have retreated.

The conservative mood of our century, and more recently of this decade, has been pitted against our science as well as against nature. The contemporary conservative is anxious and nervous about science. He does not know where it will lead, on the one hand; on the other hand, he feels that it will lead to a lack of reverence. But it is precisely this need for reverence, even for some form of transcendence, that our science is more and more willing to encompass. Sir Bernard Lovell, the great director of the radio astronomy station at Joddrell Bank, has said that we may now be able to examine the molecules in a sunset, and to begin to understand the strange atmosphere and surface of Venus, but that our science is unable, and no longer claims, to unravel the ethos of the evening star. The more we gaze on our own system and even on the rest of the universe, even on phenomena like the black holes that we cannot see, the more lovely and wondrous, intricate and awe-inspiring it seems. Lovers have not forfeited the moon to the astronauts, or to the scientists at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Our science is no longer the sorcerer's apprentice, but again the handmaiden of our deepest longings, and this is why the exploration matters to us, because there is all the difference between the pictures of Jupiter, of Io and Ganymede and Callisto and Europe, and the calculations that made them possible. Our world and the future are not closed, but are opening to us as never before. This is the new vitality for which we, our philosophy and our societies and our politics, have waited so long.

Totting up the score in President Carter's most noble enterprise.

Human Rights at Half-Time

by David Hawk

Last December on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Jimmy Carter said it again: "Human rights is the soul of our foreign policy." Zbigniew Brzezinski pronounced human rights to be no less than "the historical inevitability of our time." Carter's reaffirmation was the sort of presidential categorical assertion that drives both foreign policy traditionalists and human rights advocates up the wall. Some rights advocates might worry that if human rights are the soul of United States foreign policy, then America's soul is in mortal danger. And no less a traditionalist than Henry Kissinger warned that making human rights such a vocal objec-

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tive of foreign policy risks showing impotence and producing revolution in friendly countries.

For all this high-powered rhetoric, what has President Carter's human rights policy accomplished—for human rights or for United States foreign policy? Though the situation of human rights throughout the world is still overwhelmingly depressing, there have been some improvements recently in some countries. A recent State Department report notes trends toward democracy in the Dominican Republic, Bolivia, Ecuador, Ghana, Nigeria, Peru and Thailand. There have been substantial releases of political prisoners in Bangladesh, Bolivia, Sudan, Indonesia, Nepal and Paraguay and other releases in Cuba, Guinea and South Korea. Governments in Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil and Thailand have expanded freedom of the press, labor organizations and political parties. Some of these changes are substantial. Others are more superficial.

There have been other improvements not mentioned by the State Department. Indonesia has discarded its forced transmigration scheme for "released" political prisoners; Tanzania and Mali have released prisoners; and torturers have been prosecuted in Egypt and the Philippines.

The administration is careful not to claim credit "for particular instances of human rights progress." But official United States pressure was at least partly responsible for human rights improvements taken in Chile, Haiti and Indonesia. And certainly the restoration of free elections in the Dominican Republic was a direct response to United States pressure.

But no list can be an accurate measure of the impact of Carter's human rights policies. Carter has made the world more aware of human rights. The State Department says the US initiative has "helped create an atmosphere in which improvements are more likely to occur." This is correct, even understated. But political atmospherics are transient. The improvements already brought about by the Carter initiatives may prove ephemeral. On the other hand, Carter's human rights policies could lead to permanent changes in the international legal and political framework in ways that promote respect for human rights.

Carter stands in the world's highest bully pulpit. Through his pronouncements, he has improved the international climate of opinion regarding respect for human rights. To be sure, the pope's pronouncements do somewhat the same, but Carter has more divisions. And the Carter administration's actions have not been consistent enough with his words to avoid nullifying the effects of these pronouncements. Anyone who worked in the field of human rights before Carter became president can appreciate the difference he makes. Attention to human rights by the political leader of the world's paramount power sensitizes other governments to human rights issues in general. In particular, it makes them aware that human rights violations may affect their relationship with the United States. Carter's human rights policy has made human rights a front-ranking issue in international affairs. That in itself is Carter's primary contribution to the promotion of international human rights.

Carter has raised the issue of human rights in a way that preserves an *international* approach to the struggle. He has avoided turning human rights into an American ideological crusade. That would have been disastrous for human rights around the world and deleterious to American foreign policy as well.

An often overlooked factor in making progress in human rights is the strength, tenacity and morale of democratic forces indigenous to violating countries. Courageous dissidents from Siberia to South Africa, the Malacca to the Magellan straits, need recognition. Through pronouncements and symbolic gestures such as meetings with dissidents, Carter has encouraged democratic forces and indigenous human rights advocates abroad even when subsequent United States policy cannot live up to their expectations. This can be tricky; Carter's involvement in the Scharansky case, for example, was maladroit. But official contact and expressed respect for the efforts and safety of local advocates of human rights can be very useful. Official US observers at trials of dissidents in Thailand, South Africa and the Soviet Union have helped in real as well as symbolic ways.

From the outset, the Carter administration has been aware that the promotion of international standards is the key to protection of human rights. Governmental concern for human rights should begin by defining the basic or minimum standards according to which governments should treat their citizens, and should hold each other to these minimum standards. The standards agreed to at the Helsinki Conference and repeated at the Belgrade review are examples. Neither the despicable arrests of the "Helsinki monitors" in Russia nor the Soviet stonewalling at Belgrade negated the positive impact of the Helsinki Accords on the struggle for human rights in Soviet Russia and its Eastern European satellites.

During his first year in office, Carter signed the International Human Rights Covenants and the American Convention on Human Rights, and submitted these to the Senate, along with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. These treaties now join the Genocide Convention awaiting Senate ratification. These human rights treaties are not toothless wonders; nor are they abandonments of national sovereignty. They are, in fact, the basis of intergovernmental efforts to promote the protection of human rights.

The Carter administration has reinforced the intergovernmental machinery for protecting human rights. Starting at the 1977 meeting of the OAS, the United States, in conjunction with Venezuela and Costa Rica, increased the authority and staff of the

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Inter-American Human Rights Commission, enabling it to handle more complaints, undertake more investigations and speak with more, and badly needed, credibility in hemispheric affairs. Paradoxically, by signing the American Convention on Human Rights (though it remains unratified by the Senate) the United States started a trend in Latin American nations to ratify the Convention. In effect this has established an inter-American human rights system, similar to the West European system, providing victims of violations and human rights advocates with another strengthened forum for protesting, and redressing, human rights violations.

Carter has made human rights more of a consideration in day-to-day foreign policy decisions. Congress had already expressed its desire to make human rights more important in US foreign policy; the Carter administration has brought the State Department reluctantly into line. Carter and Secretary of State Vance ended State Department attempts to negate, ignore and evade congressional human rights legislation. Human rights as a factor in US dealings with other states now exists as a matter of law and the *intent of the president*. Obviously, this helps.

Geopoliticoes need not fret. Strategic and economic interests are not taking a back seat to human rights concerns. The Department of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs is outweighed bureaucratically and in contacts around the world by the departments of Defense, Commerce, Agriculture and Labor, and the CIA—not to mention State Department personnel who do not always share Carter's, and the American people's, commitment to human rights.

But having human rights as a non-predominant factor in US foreign policy is better than having it as not a factor at all. Great powers tend to export repression as an apparently inevitable biproduct of attempts to establish a stable international environment suited to their security and economic interests. The United States has not been immune to this process. Over the last 30 years of preeminent American power, the impact of United States policies on human rights in many places in the world has not been good. Considering the recent past, Carter has a good record for avoiding the use of American power in ways destructive of human rights. And despite the inconsistencies, gaps and mistakes, there have been many cases where US influence was used positively to promote civil and political rights. The argument that these efforts have damaged US interests is not persuasive.

Carter's most impressive human rights achievements have come from initiatives taken in the earlier days of his presidency. There has not exactly been a slackening of momentum; more like a running out of easy steps to take. Human rights concerns now press more closely against a crowded national agenda. The initial impact will fade unless Carter follows through and follows up on those earlier initiatives.

Three items should be at the top of Carter's 1979 human rights agenda. The most immediate and urgent concerns United States refugee policy. The United States has a special and obvious responsibility to admit more of the Indochinese boat people currently stranded at inhospitable ports and awash on the high seas. Further, some repressive regimes have taken to letting out political prisoners and their families if other countries can be found to take them. Castro, for example, having been challenged to free Cuba's 3000 political prisoners, has called the Carter administration's bluff. The US can now secure the prompt release of these prisoners, some of whom are among the longest detained political prisoners in the world. Exchanging forced exile for incarceration is not the most desirable solution to the problem of political imprisonment, but making the United States a refuge and haven of liberty is a compelling opportunity.

These two measures need not be delayed until a coherent overall refugee and immigration policy is worked out and shepherded through Congress. For the longer term, the 1952 Nationality Act needs to be replaced by a law recognizing US responsibility to take a share of the thousands of socio-economic-political refugees and migrants who continue to flee and cross national boundaries.

Secondly, the Carter administration should lobby hard for ratification of the human rights treaties now before Congress. The treaties are a key to a United States human rights policy that will continue beyond the next two or six years. They embody the necessary *international* approach to human rights in general, and will assure sustained and constructive pressure on human rights violations in the Soviet and East European block in particular. Failure to ratify the human rights covenants and conventions would be as disastrous to our human rights policy as failure to ratify the Panama Canal Treaty would have been to our relations with Latin America; or as failure to ratify SALT II will be to strategic arms control.

The third area where the Carter administration must follow through is in integrating its human rights concerns with its policies toward violating regimes. Congress must hold hearings on violating countries that enjoy aid, so that the assessments of non-governmental organizations and academic experts can be added to the information released in the State Department's report. Military aid and sales as well as economic assistance should be more contingent on good human rights behavior.

The public supports Carter's human rights policies. Human rights was a strong concern in Congress before the executive branch took up the initiative. The policy follow-through now necessary is not too much to ask from a president who talks of human rights as Carter does—and whose commitment to human rights is worthy of emulation by every president from now on.

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Arts and Lives

Stanley Kauffmann on films

What Price Thrills?

The China Syndrome (Columbia) is a smashing thriller—the most exciting thriller I've seen since *Z* (1969). Grave questions come along after it but not until the excitement calms down, which takes a while.

The subject is nuclear energy. The title is apparently a grim nuclear trade joke: if a "meltdown" occurred in a nuclear plant and the core were released, it would eat down through the earth right to China. (It wouldn't, in fact. It would meet the water under the earth's surface and work off in torrential quantities of radioactive steam. So the Chinese can relax.) The screenplay by Mike Gray, who was aided by T. S. Cook and the director James Bridges, centers on a woman TV newscaster in Los Angeles and her cameraman, usually assigned to cute feature stories, who are sent to a nuclear energy plant to do a routine segment of a series on energy. While they are at the plant, watching the control room from the glass-enclosed visitors' gallery, a nuclear "accident" occurs. The cameraman surreptitiously shoots the whole episode.

The news pair are exultant at the scoop, as is their show's director. The head of the station sits on it. The cameraman, an ex-radical of the 1960s, steals the film from the station's vault and gets expert opinion, from the evidence on the screen, that the whole plant nearly blew up. The woman reporter, until then protective of her job, now joins in persuading the nuclear control-room manager to help them expose what really happened that day. The power company's chief and the huge contracting firm that built the plant set out to block them. Violently. The plant manager makes the decision of his life and takes action. The contest tightens and heightens. The long climactic sequence is absolutely riveting.

It's no surprise, given the subject, that the woman reporter is played by Jane Fonda. The character is not complex, it doesn't demand anything like the range of some other roles she has played, but it's great to have it in her hands. She gives it every bit of veracity and fire that it needs, and the moment just before the end when she breaks down briefly on camera is pure Fonda, therefore superb. Mike Douglas plays the cameraman, the only character who pronounces "nuclear" as "nukular." Douglas produced the film; four years ago he co-produced *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. He should no longer be known as the son of Kirk Douglas. He's on his own, and he's got an own to be on. His performance is energetic without self-flagellation, sharply comic, movingly fierce. I would guess that the energy that bounces off him had something to do with his ability to drive this picture through to completion.

The manager, who stops being a company man and becomes himself, is Jack Lemmon, at his latter-day best. His youthful best was farce, of which he shared the championship with Cary Grant. Lately, with the aid of what he learned about timing from comedy, Lemmon has been playing middle-aged men who look back at their lives with something less than utter joy—in *Save the Tiger*, for instance, or the Broadway play *Tribute*. Here he's not given much chance for retrospective roweling. We know only that he once was a submarine commander and that now he loves his nuclear engineering. (Is there a reference to Jimmy Carter here?) Lemmon throws lightning-bright light on this technician's life brought to a humanist crisis.

These actors, and all the others, are well directed by James Bridges, particularly for tempo and crossfire, yet without the frenetic feeling we get in some films: of separation—the script down here, so to speak, and the tempo a separate entity pasted on top of it. Bridges integrates the two by rooting the tempo in impulse. He has directed in the theater, has written and directed for TV and has made two films about which I had mixed feelings: *The Paper Chase*, set in a law school, and *September 30, 1955*, set in an Arkansas town. Neither of them prepared me for the slice and impact of *The China Syndrome*.

The editor was David Rawlins, and he must have had an important hand in the excitement. What's particularly good about the picture's rhythm is that it doesn't follow the usual pattern of suspense films: a fast start followed by a lull (you know, an opening murder, then long passages of fill-in), with alternating splotches of action and drags of recovery until the final whoop-up. *Syndrome* starts tight and keeps tight even before the material itself is particularly tense. (The innate pressures of TV broadcasting help it here.) So as the material itself gets more hair-raising, the editing doesn't seem to be accelerating. The whole picture is like a speeding train on which events get more gripping as it speeds along.

But. After it's all over and the pulse begins to subside—which takes time—the worry comes. Some newspapers have run stories about the controversy provoked by this film, fairly predictable comments from those known to be supporters or opponents of nuclear-energy plants. Few comments that I've seen have dealt with my worry about the film: the fact that I can't believe in nuclear-energy villains.

I hasten to state that I believe in something that historians usually

Films Worth Seeing

The Deer Hunter. Pennsylvania sport and Vietnam horror seen through the prism of male rituals. Stretched but serious.

The French Detective. Lino Ventura's solidity fills this provincial-French police-and-politics thriller.

Norma Rae. She's a mill-hand in the South, fighting to start a union. A very moving, endearing film, even if a bit naive.

Real Life. Frequently amusing spoof on the making of a documentary like *An American Family*. With Albert Brooks of *Saturday Night Live*.

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deride, the Devil Theory of history. (If there are heroes, why can't there be villains?) I know that the files are full of stories of builders who have deliberately used cheap materials and shoddy workmanship to save money, without concern for risk of life; stories of callous corporate disregard of the pollution of air and water; stories of the auto manufacturers' wriggling to evade emission controls. But I don't think they relate to nuclear energy. It's apples and pears. In all previous stories of corporate gluttony, the gluttons—however shortsighted—could walk away, could enjoy their lives, their families' lives. But if a nuclear plant goes up, where do the owners live? Where do they enjoy the $18 million that the repairs in this film would cost? What difference would it make if they saved $18 billion?

The *Dr. Strangelove* madness of the military, the thirst for overkill, can at least drug itself with the idea of desperate patriotism and the delusion that the explosions will happen to "them." But where does this head of a California power company expect to live if he manages to cover up the defect in his plant that he *knows* of? If he is sane—and he's not shown to be otherwise—why wouldn't the self-interest that here makes him cover up actually compel him to do just the opposite?

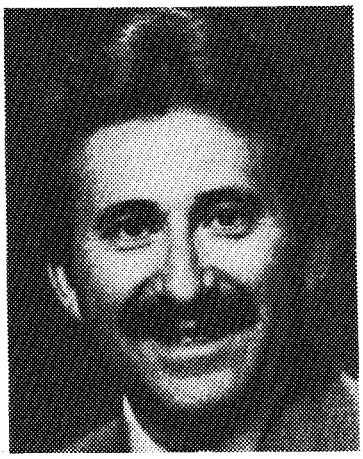
The question here is villainy, not error. Of course energy companies cannot be relied on to police themselves. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has recently shut down five large nuclear reactors along the East Coast because of questions about their safety. But (*The New York Times* editorial, March 15, 1979) "the industry behaved responsibly. Its own engineers tracked down the problem. And they reported it promptly to the proper authorities." What sane worker in a nuclear plant, no matter how money-hungry or boss-bullied, would do otherwise?

So, after the palpitations subside, *The China Syndrome* leaves us with serious doubt. If it had only underscored the constant possibility of human error in nuclear plants, it would have done a service. But *Syndrome* also casts its power executives as heavies in a James Bond flick, it shows them as willing to blow up all of southern California rather than spend $18 million and lose the license for a new plant. Short-sightedness, stupidity and error are frightening enough possibilities in such powerful men. But to show nuclear executives as so money-mad that they knowingly risk explosion to make money, that they hire thugs to help them—all this would take some proving in order to clear the picture of the charge of irresponsibility. In this regard—in this one regard only—I think the power companies are right to be enraged at *The China Syndrome*. Its very effectiveness in sheer filmic terms makes it all the more worrisome. If it were a piece of junk, who would care?

William Youngren on classical records

Until the mid and late 1960s, when we began to hear Pierre Boulez's performances of the three great early Stravinsky ballets, first on broadcasts and then on commercial records, it seemed impossible that anyone could ever rival the performances that Stravinsky himself had recorded. But Boulez brought to *Firebird*, *Petrouchka* and *Sacre* an expansiveness and grace and tonal beauty unmatched even by Stravinsky, whose performances, great as they were, grew increasingly crisp and tight as he grew older. (His last performances of the three ballets, including the complete 1910 *Firebird*, rather than the frequently heard concert suite, are on the three-disc Columbia set D3S-705.) Yet Boulez sacrificed none of Stravinsky's power and clarity, and in fact, being the virtuoso conductor that Stravinsky was not, Boulez often made the scores still clearer than Stravinsky had done.

Recently two recordings of *Petrouchka*, by two of our finest conductors, have arrived to invite comparison with that of Boulez and the New York Philharmonic (Columbia M-31076): Colin Davis's, with the Amsterdam Concertgebouw,



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on Philips 9500 447, and James Levine's, with the Chicago Symphony, on RCA ARL1-2615. Rather than the original 1911 version of the score preferred by Boulez, both Davis and Levine use the leaner and jazzier 1947 revision, for reduced orchestra and with more extensive piano part, occasional reinforcement of percussion, and one significant bit of reorchestration, in the nursemaids' dance in Part II.

The difference between Davis's and Levine's approaches to *Petrouchka* is immediately evident. Davis makes the opening Shrovetide Fair music graceful, elegant and joyous, with the various episodes that follow smoothly dovetailed. Levine makes the same music robust, driving and declamatory—the cello countermelody that begins at bar 6 is played downright raucously, even though in the score it is marked *"mezzo forte, cantabile."* Everything is powerfully rhythmic, and the contrasts among episodes are strongly accentuated: our attention is focused more on individual events than, as with Davis, on the forward motion of the music. At the beginning of Scene II, which finds the miserable Petrouchka alone in his room, Levine is dramatic and gripping, while Davis is gently pensive. In Scene III, in the Blackamoor's room, Levine makes the Blackamoor's little dance, just before the entrance of the Ballerina, sharply etched and highly syncopated; Davis smooths it out, effectively heightening the mystery that surrounds this exotic character who (among other odd bits of stage business) kneels and worships a coconut. The Ballerina's waltz with the Blackamoor, to two authentic Viennese waltz-tunes filched from Josef Lanner, is sweetly sentimental in Davis's performance, but Levine takes seriously, perhaps too seriously, Stravinsky's 1911 direction *"grotesco"* (a direction not retained in the 1947 score). In the concluding Scene IV, back at the Fair, Levine again brings out the contrasts among the various dances more sharply than Davis does, achieving an especially fine effect as he moves from the weighty climax of the group dance for nursemaids, coaches and grooms to the skittering, slithering dance of the masqueraders.

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Both recordings are superb, and the very different readings of the score they project are equally justified. Also, both conductors have been well served by their recording engineers. RCA has given Levine a brilliance and clarity of sound that accentuates the contrasts among instrumental voices as he accentuates those among episodes of the work; Philips has given Davis a more diffused, homogeneous sound that suits his stress on the work's continuity and forward motion. My only complaints are that Levine loses the humor of the marvelous episode with the bear in Scene IV by taking the ponderous music a shade too fast, and, more seriously, that Davis somewhat obscures one of Stravinsky's great innovative effects, the sound of a piano played hard and percussively within the orchestra, by having his pianist play in a subdued, almost muted, manner. Finally, on relistening to Boulez's record, I find (not much to my surprise) that he has the best of all possible worlds: Levine's rhythmic drive, Davis's elegance, and the extraordinary multilayered clarity of lines that belongs to Boulez alone.

Davis has also recently recorded *Sacre* with the Concertgebouw, on Philips 9500 323. He did it several years ago with the London Symphony, also for Philips, and I recall being disappointed. But this new recording is splendid. My only reservation is that at certain crucial points Davis plays the music too personally and expressively. *Sacre* is, after all, an intentionally remote and rather forbidding work, dealing as it does with the imagined rituals of an imagined primitive race deep in an imagined Slavic past. If we are to receive the full initial impression of remoteness and mystery that the music demands, the opening high bassoon solo and the comments from the other solo winds that soon follow must sound utterly impersonal, deadpan, even a bit spacey. This is how Boulez has them played on his recording with the Cleveland Orchestra (Columbia MS-7293) and how Stravinsky always had them played. Davis instead has the bassoon solo played almost tenderly, and with lots of rubato. And later in Part I, Davis takes the brief introduction and epilogue to the Round Dances—E-flat clarinet and bass clarinet two octaves apart with flutes trilling—very slowly, lazily and sensuously, again with a good deal of rubato. Finally, as we move toward the climax of Part II, with the choice, glorification and death of the sacrificial virgin, Davis is more directly and humanly dramatic, less mysterious and rigidly austere, than Boulez. But Davis's performance is a thrilling one, beautifully recorded and with the usual superb playing from the Concertgebouw. Though again I'll take Boulez.

Boulez has recently recorded two later Stravinsky works, the suite from *Pulcinella* and the *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*, with the New York Philharmonic on Columbia M-35105, along with early (1907-08) *Scherzo Fantastique*. *Pulcinella*, a ballet composed for Diaghilev in 1920 and based on the music then attributed to the 18th-century composer Pergolesi, was the first of Stravinsky's neoclassical works. Almost 60 years later it remains fresh and charming, and the high-spirited jazzy trombone glissandos never fail to provide a delightful shock. Boulez plays the suite drawn from the ballet with his usual grace and energy.

The *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*, also written in 1920, is much less well known—I had never heard it, or even heard of it, until Boulez performed it with the Boston Symphony in 1969. But it is a very important work and, when one gets to know it well, a fascinating and beautiful one. As Stravinsky was well aware at the time, the *Symphonies* completely lacks the theatricality and immediate surface attractiveness of the early ballets and *Pulcinella*. "It is an austere ritual," he later wrote in his 1935-36 *Chronicle of My Life*, "which is unfolded in terms of short litanies between different groups of homogeneous instruments." In this highly abstract music Stravinsky seems to be probing and testing tonal and rhythmic possibilities for their own sake, with no dramatic or narrative or even expressive end in view. Yet once one gets inside the *Symphonies* the work comes to be enormously expressive. One has the sense of powerful distillation and compression that one often has listening to Webern. Boulez's recording is more powerful and leisurely than the Boston performance of 10 years ago and, unlike that performance, the recording employs the original 1920 score rather than the 1947 revision, which replaced the alto flute and alto clarinet of the original with two ordinary clarinets. This is stark, awe-inspiring, deeply touching music that deserves to be better known. That Stravinsky composed such an openly "experimental" work—in honor of Debussy, interestingly enough—in the same year he embarked on his neoclassical phase tells us a great deal about the variety and

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cohesiveness of his remarkably eclectic musical imagination, and reminds us that much later in his life, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, he was rearranging Gesualdo madrigals even as he was composing the serial works inspired by his newly found admiration for Schoenberg and Webern.

Finally there is the intriguing *Scherzo Fantastique*, which Stravinsky said "owes much more to Mendelssohn by way of Tchaikovsky than to Rimsky-Korsakov"—Stravinsky's teacher at the time. One can understand why Stravinsky, returning to this early piece to conduct it 50 years after its composition, delightedly found himself "not embarrassed" by it. For all his denial, there is a good deal of the familiar Rimsky glamor here; the fast opening and closing sections are full of flamboyant yet fastidious orchestral color that will mark the great ballets of a few years later; the openly Tchaikovskian melodic middle section points forward to the affectionate use Stravinsky will make of Tchaikovsky in the 1928 ballet *Le Baiser de la Fée*. The performance is, like the others on the record, splendid in all ways.

Books Considered

Orientalism
by Edward Said
(Pantheon; $15)

Edward Said's angry book is about a collusion of knowledge with power. The knowledge is Orientalism and the power is imperialism. Said contends that images of the Orient in the West's traditions of learning and literature are of a piece with the institutions of conquest and administration that it loosed upon the East. Fictions about Islam and the Arabs were manufactured to justify, and even exalt, Europe's rapacious political and cultural designs. In Said's account the self-serving misperceptions appear already in Aeschylus (Peter Brown once called this sort of thing "the Plato-to-NATO" school of intellectual history); Said lingers, too, over hostile caricatures of Muslims in Dante's *Inferno*, as if Christians in 13th-century Arab works fared any better. But it is with Napoleon that his arraignment of the Orientalist abuse gets fully underway. Napoleon's campaign in Egypt was, according to Said, the first of many colonial enterprises underwritten by the expertise of scholars and writers on the Orient:

> *For Napoleon Egypt was a project that acquired reality in his mind, and later in his preparations for its conquest, through experiences that belong to the realm of ideas and myths culled from texts, not empirical reality. His plans for Egypt therefore became the first in a long series of European encounters with the Orient in which the Orientalist's special expertise was put directly to functional colonial use.*

The philological and historiographical achievements of Silvestre de Sacy and Ernest Renan, of Louis Massignon and H. A. R. Gibb, were all mortgaged to the global interest of capitalist France and Great Britain. The scholars furnished an Orient that was immobile, aberrant, supine, exotic—an Orient, in short, ripe for possession, and which possession would only improve. And the scholars' version became canonical, so that Europe knew only the Arabs in the texts, and nothing of what Arabs really were. "They cannot represent themselves; they must be represented"—Said cites this verse from Marx to describe exactly the powerlessness of the Arabs before the authority of Orientalism.

Said's indictment of the professors for their part in the cultural preparation of imperialism is, however, not a little skewed. The correlation of learning with policy was neither as tight nor as foul as he purports. Not as tight, because Orientalism's greatest strides of scholarship were made in countries that had no hand in the occupation of Arabia. They took place in the Netherlands, in Austria, and, of course, in Germany; by scholars such as de Groeje, Hurgronje, Noeldeke, Muller, Goldziher, Wellhausen, Becker, Weil, Dozy. These figures Said treats scoutishly or not at all. And not as foul, because Said's assumptions about the conduct of humanistic scholarship are decidedly contestable.

Said begins his book with an attack on objectivity. "No production of knowledge in the human sciences can ever ignore or disclaim its author's involvement as a human subject in his own circumstances." There are cultural values and political premises buried even in the tomes of the philologists. In fact that is most of what is buried there:

> *I believe it needs to be made clear about cultural discourse and exchange within a culture that what is commonly circulated by it is not "truth" but representations. . . . The value, efficacy, strength, apparent veracity of a written statement about the Orient therefore relies very little, and cannot instrumentally depend, on the Orient as such. . . . The things to look at are style, figures of speech, setting, narrative devices, historical and social circumstances,* not *the correctness of the representation nor its fidelity to some great original.*

The human sciences tell primarily of themselves, of the real and perceived conditions to which they are in thrall.

Such strictures are not merely in order, they are commonplace. Of course objectivity is confounded by the impurities of the scholar's life in the world. Yet we continue to distinguish the study that is more precise, the judgment that is more just, from that which is less. And that is not because the scholar has transcended the presuppositions with which his work is overrun, or because "truth" has been miraculously discovered, but because it is possible for practicing historians—if not for voyeur theorists—to recognize a point at which the evidence stops and the interpretation begins, and to measure one against the other. This they do at least often and effectively enough to make their activity meaningful. Partisan scholars may turn up truths, and they may not. What will decide is their intellectual responsibility and professional competence; and, for these requirements not even the noblest intention may stand in.

Conor Cruise O'Brien has warned against the impairment of scholarly integrity by political inhibitions. Such vigilance is surely preferable to the well-heeled complacence of many political scientists and foundation boards. For objectivity may often be abused: much error and much evil have been the work of experts. Renan's racism, for example, is plain. But Renan's views must be rejected not only because they are

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villainous, but because they were wrong, and that is not the same. It is one thing to fear a betrayal by the intellectuals, and quite another to believe in the impossibility of knowledge.

How, then, evaluate the production of the human sciences? Having banished "correctness" and "fidelity," Said collapses egregiously into politics. "No person academically involved with the Near East—no Orientalist, that is—has ever . . . culturally and politically identified himself wholeheartedly with the Arabs." This, then, is what is wanting. Critical detachment is a chimera, malice breeds untruth: all that remains are sympathy, participation ("The Orientalist is outside the Orient," Said laments), and service. Said is entirely dead to the gains in understanding promised by an adversary attitude—gains of the sort illustrated, for instance, by the writings of Solzhenitsyn, the Medvedevs, Aleksandr Nekrich. Much of what we know about the political system and recent history of the Soviet Union we have learned from scholars and writers who oppose it. And those in the West most sympathetic have proved in many ways to be the most mistaken. Enlightenment is frequently the fruit of dissent, and certainly of skepticism.

But not for Said. Criticism, in his view, is only an expression of treachery. As in this passage:

> *Ignaz Goldziher's appreciation of Islam's tolerance toward other religions was undercut by his dislike of Mohammed's anthropomorphisms and Islam's too-exterior theology and jurisprudence; Duncan Black Macdonald's interest in Islamic piety and orthodoxy was vitiated by his perception of what he considered Islam's heretical Christianity; Carl Becker's understanding of Islamic civilization made him see it as a sadly undeveloped one; C. Snouck Hurgronje's highly refined studies of Islamic mysticism (which he considered the essential part of Islam) led him to a harsh judgement of its crippling limitations; and Louis Massignon's extraordinary identification with Islamic theology, mystical passion, and poetic art kept him curiously unforgiving to Islam for what he regarded as its unregenerate revolt against the idea of incarnation. The manifest differences in their methods emerge as less important than their Orientalist consensus on Islam: latent inferiority.*

Inferiority? No, it is only imperfection of which Islam stands here accused, and for Said Islam must be perfect. Perhaps Mohammed's anthropomorphisms were not all that objectionable, and the limitations of Islamic mysticism not all that crippling. But monopoly capitalism seems strangely served by the belief to the contrary.

Scholarship for Said, we may conclude, must pass political muster. Only scholars who champion the Arabs comprehend them. These are not many, but they include Jacques Berque, Maxime Rodinson and Roger Owen. It suffices for Noam Chomsky to have written tirelessly on the Arabs' behalf to be also counted among the exemplary *érudit*. The mantle of the Orientalists, on the other hand, has fallen most firmly on Bernard Lewis. Said concludes his book with an hysterical attack on Lewis. At issue is the etymology of *thawra*, the Arabic word for revolution. Lewis proposed that "the root *th-w-r* in classical Arabic meant to rise up (e.g., as a camel), to be stirred, excited, and . . . hence to rebel." Said smells an enemy: "Why introduce the idea of a camel rising as an etymological root for modern Arab revolution except as a clever way of discrediting the modern?" And more: "Lewis's association of *thawra* with a camel rising and generally with excitement (and not with a struggle on behalf of values) hints . . . that the Arab is scarcely more than a neurotic sexual being." And still more: "But . . . it is a 'bad' sexuality he ascribes to the Arab. In the end, since [he is] not really equipped for serious action, the sexual excitement is no more noble than a camel's rising up." And, finally, because Lewis notes that *thawra* was "often used in the context of establishing a petty, independent sovereignty," and not to denote a full political and social revolution, his real meaning is "that instead of copulation the Arab can achieve foreplay, masturbation, coitus interruptus."

All that is patently fatuous, but it is precisely what Said is up to. I know of no word for revolution in any language whose root refers to "a struggle on behalf of values"; the English certainly does not. Said does not prove, moreover, that Lewis's etymology is wrong, only that it is politically unacceptable. It happens that none other than Jacques Berque has put forward an alternative. Berque maintains the *thawra* means "effervescence," and likens it to a usage in medieval physics which referred to the rising of a hair on a head. Now an upright hair flatters Ben Bella and Habash no more than an upright camel; and, if sex is at stake, camels rise more naturally and for longer than hairs. But of Berque's suggestion we hear nothing. Berque is with the revolution, and so may pass. (The revolution still eats its own: a few years ago there appeared in *Les Temps Modernes* a vigorous denunciation of Jacques Berque for just those Orientalist sins against which Said rails.)

As Said construes the human sciences, then, it would be impossible to regard skeptically any aspect of the Arab world without being a tool of imperialism. Scholarly integrity, intellectual responsibility, professional competence—these aspirations he would no doubt dismiss as sentimental and ingenuous. And they are, in a sense, ingenuous; or, rather, they are a matter of philosophical conviction. One believes in free inquiry or one does not. Said does not: "learned and imaginative writing are never free." There is no room in his scheme for an exercise of intelligence that is not exhaustively determined by its social, political and cultural environment. When the Orientalism is not "manifest" it is "latent." Or, as he bluntly puts it, "every European, in what he could say about the Orient, was . . . a racist, an imperialist and almost totally ethnocentric."

"Every European": there were malefactors outside the academy as well. The authority of Orientalism is, in fact, most apparent in its grip upon the imagination—upon writers such as Chateaubriand, Nerval and Flaubert, upon painters such as Gérôme and Delacroix. (Gérôme's languorous and very beautiful *Snake Charmers* may be consulted on the dust jacket of Said's book. *Orientalism*, it says, above the fetching little ass of an Arab boy displaying himself and a snake to a group of rapt Arab warriors. A shrewd advertisement, this: sort of like selling feminism with a Vargas girl.) Said does not discuss the painters—many of Delacroix's florid Orientals were Jews anyway—but he takes pains to describe the deployment of the Orient in the literary geography of the last century. This he does instructively. He is particularly good on those writers—Edward William Lane, most poignantly—who were caught between Orientalist expectations and their experience of the Orient. None entirely overcame this division. It was no mere prejudice, however, with which they wrestled. Orientalism is more than the sum of scholars' myths and poets' fancies. It is, we are finally admonished, an epistemology.

Presiding over Said's philippic is the mighty methodological vision of Michel Foucault. Foucault's subject is the

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incarceration of man in concepts; surely no historian of ideas has ever drawn so tenebrous a portrait of human life's enslavement to its own intellectual creations. Foucault's extraordinary books are chapters in a terrible history of utter domination by discourse: by the discourse of medicine, natural science, political economy, penology, sex. These are not so much departments of learning, Foucault counsels, but instruments of control; they are "discursive systems" which ordain their own "enunciative possibilities and impossibilities," what may and may not be said in their field, and so govern absolutely. Orientalism is nothing less than such a system, as insurmountable and as injurious. And yet, pleads Said, it must be unlearned.

Dissolve to the West Bank.

II

Our Zionist faith and aspirations were composed of two things, and two things only: the people of Israel and the land of Israel. This faith was not created or sustained by the Turks, or Kaiser Wilhelm, or Balfour.

—Ben Gurion, 1937

Edward Said's essay is not, as Albert Hourani has timidly suggested, about "the way in which intellectual traditions' are created and transmitted." It is about the way in which intellectual traditions bedevil contemporary politics. More specifically, it is about how Orientalism is responsible for the failure of Palestinian nationalism.

Hard as it is to detect amid the allusions and abstractions with which the book is swollen, the real argument of *Orientalism* is that Palestinians continue to elude their political destiny because the epistemological habits of the French and the British have been inherited by the Israelis and the Americans. The argument is in three parts: Zionism is colonialism, American policy in the Middle East is imperialism (thus are the Palestinians awarded the cachet of third world cant), the Palestinians remain unheeded. *Orientalism* establishes Edward Said as among the more formidable of Zionism's cultured despisers. For the methodological gadgetry and "iconoclastic" analysis of his book issue in little more than the abject canards of Arab propaganda.

"The Semitic myth bifurcated in the Zionist movement: one Semite went the way of Orientalism, the other, the Arab, was forced to go the way of the Oriental." Or, elsewhere: "The difference between Renan and Weizman is that the latter had already gathered behind his rhetoric the solidity of institutions whereas the former had not." The ignorance in such passages is staggering. Said knows virtually nothing about the modern history of the Jews, about the origins and nature of the Zionist impulse. Someone as incensed as he by hasty and politically duplicitous scholarship might have taken the trouble to examine more closely the ideological and political development of the movement he impugns. Said prefers his rage. He adduces Balfour, and Weizman to Balfour, and crudely concludes that Zionism was another monstrous colonial adventure.

Zionism was a movement of national liberation. With a difference, to be sure: it required for its fulfillment the resettlement of an oppressed (according to Albert Memmi, a colonized) Jewish population. This resettlement, which was a return from exile, and in the event disappointed all Zionist hopes, was the optical illusion which made many cry colonialism; it was, too, the movement's tragic feature, for it insured that Zionism would have victims. Yet Zionism was, in the words of the astute Hayim Greenberg, "in recent history . . . the first instance of colonization free from imperialist ambition or the desire to rule any part of the population." The leaders of the *yishuv*—not merely the lofty likes of Judah Magnes, but figures of real political consequence within Labor Zionism—were ardently committed to cooperation with the Arabs, with whom many wished to collaborate in the social and democratic reconstruction of Palestine. (Not so Jabotinsky, whose writings are sadly marred by slurs and stereotypes, and by a proclivity to empire.) They were, no doubt, too sanguine. The inhabitants of Palestine could hardly have blessed the Jewish pioneers, though it is interesting to note that neither the first nor the second *aliyah* was perceived by them as imperialistic. The opposition of the fellahin who had—and still have—their rights, however, has nothing to do with the legitimacy of Jewish nationalism. And as the decades passed the crisis in Europe grew dire, and Zionism became a program for return in an hour of emergency, and Europe became a charnel house for the Jews.

The doctrine that Zionism is colonialism is not new—even Orwell delivered himself of the opinion that "the Palestine issue is partly a colour issue, and an Indian nationalist . . . would probably side with the Arabs"—but it has in recent years enjoyed renewed currency, and so it is important to understand precisely in what the slander consists. It is not merely political. Would that it were: political differences allow for solutions, as Anwar Sadat has demonstrated. What is denied is rather that Jewish politics has a national motive—that is, that the Jews are a nation, that they possess the legitimate rights and privileges of a nation, that they have a history out of which certain practical conclusions must be drawn. Zionism is just such a conclusion. It is the genuine expression of a moral, psychological and political evolution within the Jewish world; it cannot be understood otherwise. Said and his ilk, therefore, have not understood it. They look to the history

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of the Europeans when they should be looking to the history of the Jews. The immolation of the Jews in Nazi Europe moves them not at all. (In a recent essay on "The Idea of Palestine in the West" Said observes sardonically that support for the idea of a Jewish state surged "with the advent of Fascism in Europe." He may be assured that the Zionists would have done without that particular stroke of fortune.) Said sees Zionists in Palestine representing not themselves, but others; he sees Jews in the service only of the British.

British interests were for a time identified with the growth of the Jewish community in Palestine, and that growth certainly owed something to the British endorsement of Zionist claims. But that endorsement, even Balfour's, was not why Zionism won, and anyway it did not always come. The instruments of policy emitted by the Foreign Office in the 1920s and 1930s were in the main designed to diminish the benefits accruing to the *yishuv* from Balfour's largesse. Zionism's struggle, furthermore, was as often with the mandatory as it was with the citrus crop and the fedayeen. "In every hour of our lives as Jews and as workers," Berl Katznelson remarked in 1931, "as citizens and in our colonization activity, we feel the [British] administration to be colonial and absolutistic. We are hurt by its degradations and its insults." The notion of Zionist fealty to the British in Palestine is, in short, preposterous. Nor was the attitude of the Palestinian community toward the British any less ambiguous. It courted the Crown as well, and turned against it whenever it appeared that Jews were all the burden the white man wanted to bear. Significant elements in the Palestinian leadership decided expediently to become clients of the Nazis. How Hitler's Orientalism must have grated!

Zionism has once in its parlous career allied itself proudly with the affairs of a great power. That power is the United States, for which Israel dependably speaks. And this makes Israel, in Said's view, an agent of imperialism. "From the beginning of the nineteenth century France and Britain dominated the Orient and Orientals; since World War II America has dominated the Orient, and approaches it as France and Britain once did." The prize this time around is oil. But this time may be the first that the profits have redounded to the natives. It is a curious kind of imperialism that distorts its own economy, imposes the hardship on its own people, and alters its own foreign policy, all to meet the gross political and commercial demands of the peoples it was supposed to plunder. The oil cartel is untouched, the oil fields uninvaded—which any imperialist worth his salt would have seen to long ago. And hundreds of millions of imperialist dollars annually feed and arm the vanguard of the revolution. (What does Said think is filling the PLO's coffers? Chomsky's royalties?) With enemies like these, who needs friends?

The desire to rid the region of major powers and their Mephistophelian bargains is very estimable. It is not, however, Said's. He is aware that lesser states and movements cannot prosecute their interests without the patronage of such a power. Their own weaknesses, and global rivalries, forbid it. And so his orations against Western imperialism and its wickedness translate into a concrete political choice: the Soviet Union. The preference appears coyly at various places in the book; but it is glaring in the absence of any even desultory consideration of Soviet Orientalism and the fitful development of Soviet policy toward the Arabs. Before Bandung the Arabs were treated

ROWING ON THE ACHERON

These two sitting across a table
suddenly were seated side by side
out rowing on the Acheron.
She'd asked, "How often have you died?"

Could one embrace so close to hell,
he might have caught her emptiness
against his empty breast and made,
perhaps, a shade or two the less.

"How often have you *failed* to die?"
He mocked at her? and with his pain?
The prisoner of dialectics
can never cease rattling his chain.

So, two moving solitudes—so oar
and oar to either side—kept pace
on a stream so small, so shallow
they might have left it any place.

It seemed now not to matter if
the immortality almost in reach,
the universe aching to speak,
should never choose them for its speech.

The river they rode on moved in them.
She craved its flowing identities,
he to pass beyond remembering.
Failure, too, has voluptuaries.

Each saw as each was: she, on her side,
a savior take her death and die;
on his, Pluto, scavenging for lives,
was tossing back the lesser fry.

Her vivid bones a jetting flame;
he a crystal nothing could consume.
But here came the waiter with the check,
the busboy sweeping past with a broom.

Delicate, swift, their waking glance
exchanged the vision each had seen,
their next was blank, the last returned
their smiles, and set the table between.

Irving Feldman

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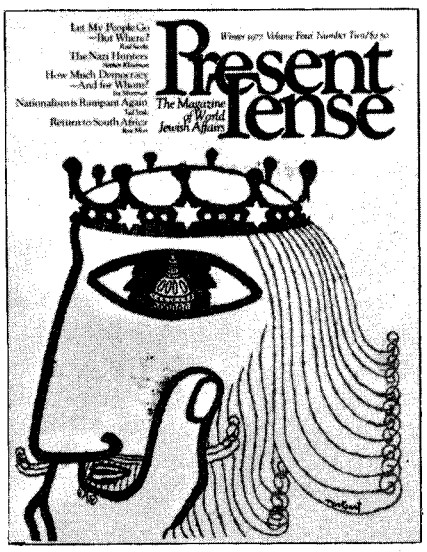

On American Jews: "For the first time in American history, American Jews feel secure enough in their Jewishness and in their Americanism to challenge major aspects of this country's foreign policy." Stephen Isaacs.

On Soviet Jews: "The historic turning-point was the trial in 1970 of eleven foolish, naive young people who hoped to steal a small airplane and fly to freedom in Scandinavia." Murray Seeger.

On searching for roots in Eastern Europe: "Where was my mother's home? Where was the path she must have walked to the Narew River she had told me about? Where was the synagogue and where was the market place?" Sigmund Diamond.

On Jerusalem: "No place on earth offers so many delights to the eye, the ear and the mind as Kollek's Jerusalem, but one must find the time to stand and stare." Chaim Bermant.

On renewed interest in Judaica among young Americans: "The young people perceived themselves as survivors of the failures of Jewish education and the false values of America." Sylvia Rothchild.

On Israel's Nature Reserves: "It may be that General Yoffe's animals will somehow lead the people of the Middle East to peace one day. But the tanks were in the mountains, waiting. The real beast in the desert was still man." Robert Spero.

On being a Jewish poet: "The truest Jewish poetry will be written out of the inward preoccupations of people who happen to be Jews." M. L. Rosenthal.

On the Persian Gulf arms race: "The ramifications of what is happening... extend from the Caspian Sea to the Suez Canal and from the African Coast to Pakistan." Tad Szulc.

On Israel's Arab intellectuals: "I am an Israeli but I cannot be a Jew." Naomi Shepherd.

On American foreign policy: "American companies, which for so long we have considered 'our companies,' have in fact become the policing agents of the Arabs' boycott against the U.S." Paul Dickson.

On South Africa: "To live with such a system of laws, with certificates of racial purity, with leaders who admired Hitler, to live in South Africa as a Jew and to be silent and happy takes some special skills." Rose Moss.

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by Russian academicians with ignorance or indifference. But by the 1950s it was clear to the Russians that the Arabs could be used; and new journals of Oriental studies began to appear, and the shibboleths of the restive third world came to be intoned by the supple Mikoyan and his successors. There is no reason to believe that Soviet scholars understand their subject any better than their Western peers. Their government, however, stands behind radical forces in the Arab countries, and that will do. The Marxist-Leninist minions training in the hills of Lebanon, Syria and Iraq seem not to care that they are fighting imperialism with imperialism, and neither does Said.

The gravest threat posed by the West, Said continues, may lie in the export of its civilization. The Arab world, he writes, is "an intellectual . . . and cultural satellite" of the United States. "The Arab and Islamic world as a whole is hooked into the Western market system"—as, indeed, is Israel, where the quality of culture is in some ways also imperilled by "transistors, blue jeans, and Coca Cola." Said is alarmed by the proliferation in the Middle East of American consumerism and its corruptions. But the influence of the West upon the Arab nations has surely been more complex. It might best be described as a mixed curse. And not merely because of the blandishments of modernization—which, as the glorious women of Iran have shown, will not be so swiftly renounced. From the West there has also been introduced into Arab society the ideological equipment for its own awakening, the very concepts of rationality and progress, nation and revolution, in the name of which Arabs criticize and revolt. The Arab left was not created out of the Koran. And here is Said, excoriating the West in the dialectical sonorities of Gramsci and Foucault.

III

Which brings us, at last, to the myth of the invisible Palestinian. "There exists [in America] an almost unanimous consensus that politically he does not exist." Or, as Said wrote last spring, "we seem scarcely capable of making actual and legitimate the bare facts of our presence." The West simply does not see the Palestinian, we are told, because its *episteme* will not permit.

But this is dramatically untrue. The Palestinians are the political heroes of the season, and of many before and many to come. They have almost completely usurped the moral prestige which once attached to Zionism; and the obloquy into which Zionism has fallen is as good a sign as any of how twisted are the times. *Bien-pensants* everywhere are beside themselves in the Palestinians' support. The United Nations cannot pay them sufficient tribute. And they are the centerpiece of the solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict for which American policymakers most ache. Carter's pronouncement in Clinton in 1977 constitutes nothing less than a Balfour Declaration for the Palestinians: the president of the United States announced that his government views with favor the establishment of a homeland for them in Palestine. The Mideast expert in residence at the National Security Council is a scholar whose reputation was made in the study of Algerian and Palestinian nationalism. He and the other professor are plainly doing their very best to evict the Israelis from the West Bank. In high places the Palestinians are sitting rather pretty.

But perhaps not in lower places. "Since World War II, and more noticeably after each Arab-Israeli war, the Arab Muslim has become a figure in American popular culture." But an unsavory figure, complains Said: the American media depict the Arab always beside a gas pump or with a gun in his hands. How unfair. Perhaps this has something to do with the fact that the Palestinians and their supporters have relied most upon oil and murder. No anti-Arab bias, after all, robbed Sadat of America's admiration. But, we must recall, "the things to look at are style, figures of speech, setting, narrative devices, historical and social circumstances, *not* the correctness of the representation or its fidelity to some great original." Study the Americans, not the Arabs.

In his account of Orientalist scholarship Said's method suffers for his politics. Here his politics suffers for his method. And yet it is not their reading of Renan that prods security guards at Western airports to have another poke at Libyan and Iraqi pouches. The application of a Foucault-like holism to the realities of the political world has the consequence only of absolving the actors of their accountability. There are politicians in Israel who, without such sophistication, arrive at a similar and equally explosive despair; Said resembles no one so much as those on the other side who attribute all that befalls them to anti-Semitism, for whom all there will ever be is war. But the Jews did not build their state with such self-pity or paranoia, and neither will the Palestinians.

Nor did Jews build it with terror; right-wing militants whose appetite for confrontation threatened the rewards of decades of hard work and slow growth were harshly brought into line, and may be again. On Palestinian strategy Said is silent. His *jusq'au-boutisme*, however, is unmistakable. How, indeed, do battle with an epistemology? Strong measures are called for. To overthrow the triumphalist dogmas of Western consciousness it may be necessary to smuggle a few bombs into Israeli pickle barrels. Discursive systems die hard.

Said's foray into cultural history is, then, just another apology for rejectionism. And there is something morally pusillanimous about its appearance in the current political climate. In the wake of Sadat's initiative and the accords at Camp David—which Said attacked last September—the Israelis are in the throes of a strenuous reassessment of their designs upon the territories. Peace Now proved that it has finally become respectable in Israeli society to wish to exchange territories for peace. And as a growing number of Israelis come at last to question their claim to Nablus Said sets out to show that they have no claim even to Tel Aviv.

But where is Peace Now's counterpart among the Palestinians? Who among them has the courage to condemn their own crimes and engage the Israelis? Where is their Eliav, their Yariv, their Weizman? Where, indeed, is their Begin? Nowhere in the history of Palestinian nationalism since the 1920s is there to be found anything but boycott and violence. The Palestinians have their own feral and fruitless tactics to blame for their failure to achieve a state: the maximalists fulfilled their own fears. As they surely will again. The leadership of the PLO today is good only for assassinations and interviews. It still has no eye for the main chance. It dreams instead of social revolution, and lately of Islam. No wonder, then, that the architects of the region's first blueprint for peace have to speak for the Palestinians. They cannot represent themselves; they must be represented.

It is a vital interest of Israel that the national and political needs of the people with whom it must live be met. The autonomy plan, for all its shortcomings, is at least the beginning of the end of Palestinian tutelage, and so should be honored. Reports in the Israeli press of

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proposals before the Israeli cabinet to restrict even further the scope of Palestinian self-rule are disturbing; bad faith now will only make matters worse. The Israeli government must stand up to fear, and greed, and the madness of petty messianists who disfigure Judaism even as they endanger Israel. ("The Jews did not come to Israel to be safe," Geula Cohen recently explained.) But it has made a fine opening move. It is finally Arafat and his pack, and not Gush Emunim, who make the Israelis go slowly. As the Israelis must, the imprecations of diplomats and intellectuals notwithstanding, until the Palestinians abandon their holy anger for credible objectives, and terrorism becomes statesmanship. The Palestinians have the right to determine their own future. They do not have the right to determine Israel's. For both it is the moment of truth.

Leon Wieseltier

Leon Wieseltier is doing graduate work in Jewish history at Harvard, where he has just been appointed a junior fellow. His essays and reviews have appeared in the *New York Review of Books* and elsewhere.

Literary Landscapes of the British Isles: A Narrative Atlas by David Daiches and John Flower

(Paddington Press; $12.95)

At roughly the moment the British vacated Suez, the volumes of the World's Classics and Everyman's Library, which in their millions once conveyed classic British literature to the United States, began to take on the status of rarities here. With the decline of British political power, British literature has seemed more and more irrelevant, until now you can bring a dinner party of university-trained people to a dead stop by dropping a name like Sidney or Landor or Patmore or Firbank. Recently, a friend of mine who teaches English in the Middle West wrote me in despair: "A blow today: I have been informed that *The Voyage Out*, *Jacob's Room*, and *The Waves* are all out of print in this country, in either hardback or paperback. A nice way to gut my second semester Virginia Woolf seminar before it begins." And a seminar of mine has just been gutted in the same way. I have discovered that for the first time in 30 years no edition whatever of Reynold's *Discourses on Art* is in print here: there used to be three or four. If the actual works of British writers are not much wanted, gossip about them, like the current obsession with the Bloomsberries, is at a peak, and picture books flourish about the writers' "worlds" (*Lewis Carroll and His World*, even *Somerset Maugham and His World*). It is as if everything about British writers fascinates except their words.

The latest event in the process of replacing authors' works by their associations is this curious bit of book-making by David Daiches, formerly professor of English at Cornell, and the cartographer John Flower. Daiches is responsible for the first 227 pages, a series of essays with numerous illustrations designed to show how "a sense of place was important in the literary imagination of some major writers." His essays deal with Chaucer's world and the London of Shakespeare, Johnson, Dickens and Woolf; Bath and the Lake District; the Brontë country and Hardy's "Wessex" and the Midlands under Victorian industrialism; Scotland in literature and the Dublin of Yeats and Joyce. And there's an anomalous essay on "The Romantic Poets Abroad," which, despite the assurance of the book's title that it is the literary topography of the British Isles that's at issue, gives us Wordsworth in the Alps, Keats (briefly) in Rome, and Shelley and Byron in Italy. In addition to contributing maps to Daiches's part of the book, Flower has provided at the end a disjunct 25-page literary atlas of the British Isles as well as more detailed literary maps of Edinburgh, Dublin, Oxford, Cambridge and central London. He has included an 18-page gazetteer indicating where over 200 authors were born, lived and died. There are also lists of those buried or memorialized in Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's, those who lived at the Inns of Court (Sir Thomas More to Rider Haggard), and those who attended the major public schools (a school qualifies for listing if it has produced at least two "literary figures"). Because, as Flower acknowledges, most of his data derive from Dorothy Eagle and Hilary Carnell's excellent *Oxford Literary Guide to the British Isles* (1977), we are to suppose that the superadded essays by Daiches make this book special.

They do, but in a melancholy sense. It is sad to see "a founder of the University of Sussex" (jacket blurb) and the author of the best modern book on Robert Burns reduced to thinking so superficially and writing so badly. Throughout, literature is assumed to be a branch of photography, bearing a wholly representational relation to actuality. Daiches makes much, for example, of Wordsworth's notice of daffodils and implies that you have to perceive them in the Lake District to depict them persuasively. Wordsworth's daffodils do come from the Lake District, but they also come from Pliny and ancient myth, from Spenser and Shakespeare and Herrick and Milton, and from Dorothy Wordsworth's notebook. In the same way, pictures are assumed to be essentially representational, and engravings by Doré and after Turner are offered without stylistic analysis as depictions of real scenes.

In the writing there is constant incoherence and waywardness and irrelevance, and some of the essays are barely about literature at all, as if they'd been thrown in from some other book. The one called "The Blackening of

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England," about the Midlands, is a brisk classroom survey of economic conditions with only a glance occasionally at Carlyle and Dickens and Disraeli. D. H. Lawrence, the laureate of the industrial nasty in *Sons and Lovers* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, is accorded one brief clause, and the main work of "description" is entrusted to Engels. In dealing with such matters as capital punishment in the 18th century and the plight of the London poor in the 19th, Daiches gives us the usual 20th-century self-righteousness and seems to assume that the task of imaginative writers is to expose social wrongs. Thus he writes of Woolf:

> *In her novels she recognizes the existence of poverty and gives us glimpses of it every now and again to support the structure of mood and feeling she is building up, but she does not explore it (as Gissing had done, for example, in* The Nether World*).*

Which is to expect a tetrahedron to be a billiard ball.

The chapter on Bath is representative of Daiches's method, which is to invoke the most obvious sources (here, Goldsmith and Christopher Anstey and Smollett and Austen) and to quote them for pages without analysis, as if they were trying to describe Bath rather than generate compelling fictions. All the clichés are tossed in, whether related to literature and topography or not: Beau Nash, Bath Oliver Biscuits, the prohibition of duelling. And sometimes clichés yield to stubborn irrelevance. Daiches ends the Bath essay by noting that George Saintsbury chose to retire there. Where the essays are not canned literary history with special resort to place-names, they are shallow biographies of writers or gravely reductive plot-summaries of novels. We are taken along on Mrs. Dalloway's and her acquaintances' London walks and on Bloom's wanderings in Dublin without learning anything but lists of street names.

Since Daiches is a Scot, we'd expect something original and interesting in the essay "Scotland and Literature." What we get are conventional remarks about Burns, Scott and Stevenson, and a translation of *Kidnapped* into tedious topographical notation (David Balfour and Alan Breck "cross Loch Ericht by night and proceed 'down its eastern shore to another hiding-place near the head of Loch Rannoch.' They cross Loch Rannoch and move south to the Braes of Balquidder. After a night at Strathyre they push on southward and eventually reach Allan Water and follow it down.") That's what most of the book sounds like, although sometimes it sounds like this too:

> *Coleridge was born at Ottery St. Mary, Devonshire, in 1772, and was educated at Christ's Hospital, London, and at Jesus College, Cambridge . . . . In 1795 he was living in Bristol with Southey. . . . In October 1795 he married Sarah Fricker and settled in Clevedon, Somerset, on the Bristol Channel. In 1797 he moved to a cottage at Nether Stowey, Somerset. . . .*

This from a work said by its publisher to represent "a landmark in literary criticism," to offer "literary criticism at its most readable." Readable? It's not even publishable.

Let's posit a couple of innocent young college English teachers embarked on their first literary visit to the British Isles. They have been saving for years for this, and although their budget is tight, at the last moment before leaving New York they've bought this book, attracted by its pretty jacket. Its subtitle, *A Narrative Atlas*, seems to promise just what they need, and the jacket assures them that the atlas and gazetteer part constitutes "an invaluable reference for travelers." These young people are devoted to A. E. Housman (their tastes are somewhat retrograde), and their new book tells them that he's buried in Ludlow, Shropshire. (They are even so old-fashioned that they remember the text of "When smoke stood up from Ludlow.") They want to visit Housman's grave, and on their fourth day in England they set off from London northwestward in their (viciously costly) rented car. The man drives, and the woman sits in the strange left-hand front seat (spooky at first) proposing to direct him to Ludlow from Flower's maps. She quickly finds Ludlow in the Geographical Index, but when she turns to Map 7, Square A3 (nervously, for her partner is already beginning to panic in the traffic on the Edgware Road and is bellowing for instructions), she finds Ludlow all right, but no indication of the numbered highways by which you reach it. After some hours of angry, fruitless tooling around, they stop at a fair-sized market town, find a bookshop on the High Street, and with a sigh get *The Oxford Literary Guide to the British Isles*, which they can't help noticing costs the same as the Daiches and Flower book and which is (mercifully, they will come to think) devoid of pictures. The *Oxford Guide* informs them instantly that Ludlow is on the A49 about 28 miles north of Ross-on-Wye, which you reach by taking the M50 off the M5. Once they get to Ludlow, the *Oxford Guide* tells them that Housman's ashes are buried outside the north door of St. Laurence's Church. From Daiches and Flower they'd know only that Housman was buried somewhere in Ludlow.

Returning, they decide to stop at Pembroke College, Oxford, to pay their respects to another of their favorites, Samuel Johnson (I have said that this is a very old-fashioned pair of young people). By this time they are getting adept at comparing Daiches and Flower with Eagle and Carnell, whose names, they observe with some ribaldry, are given by Daiches and Flower as Eagle and Correll. They work their way back to Oxford easily, following the numbered highways on the maps in the *Oxford Guide*. In Oxford Daiches and Flower prove not entirely useless: their map of Oxford does show the locations of the colleges. But the material of Pembroke College tells them only that Johnson was there somewhere for some time beginning in 1728. Where was his room? There's no answer in *Literary Landscapes of the British Isles*, and our young people don't want to risk rebuff from the snotty porter. No need: Eagle and Carnell give them exactly what they want. "Johnson came up in 1728 and had rooms on the second floor over the gateway." Furthermore, he stayed only 14 months.

On the drive to London, the woman navigating skillfully now with the maps at the end of the *Oxford Guide*, they agree to throw the Daiches book out the window, tearing out and retaining the only two pages not better done elsewhere, the plans of Oxford and Cambridge. This done, they hurl the book out near Hendon, and it falls with a satisfying splash in the middle of the River Brent. They feel cleaner and more intelligent now, a feeling, they conclude, almost worth the more than $13 (New York sales tax included) Daiches and Flower's book has cost. They are growing up. Next time they will look inside the poke before purchasing the pig.

Paul Fussell

Coming:
Joyce Carol Oates
on Poetry.

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Barbarism with a Human Face
by Bernard-Henri Levy
translated by George Holoch
(Harper & Row; $10)

This is an angry book, and it has angered many on the French left to whom, in some great measure, it was written. But Bernard-Henri Levy is much more than an angry young man, which is why his *Barbarie* persuaded and persuaded deeply. I am confident, in fact, that it will turn out to be one of those rare works which changes the mind of an entire generation. It certainly has had momentous political consequences. There is little doubt that had Levy, his book and his circle not propitiously emerged on the French scene, France would right now be ruled by an asymmetrical partnership of disciplined *anciens militants* from the still barely de-Stalinized Communist party and the generally well-intentioned, but unruly dissidence which calls itself the Socialist party. The truth is that Levy helped stave off the long-heralded experiment of Eurocommunism-in-power. Reason enough to be grateful: a nation as social laboratory is not a heartening prospect in our era.

The ire Levy has drawn from the left intelligentsia in France should be readily understandable. He has simultaneously exposed the callousness of its politics and the superficiality of the philosophical rationalizations that underpin that politics. Those who today deny that he is a philosopher seem as desperate as those who yesterday tried to deny Camus the same vocation: discomforted by ethical reasoning, they seek haven in obscurantist abstractions which routinely exempt the brutality of the gulag societies from criticism given other forms of power. Secular millenarianism, Levy argues, with a calm mastery of its various but not so intrinsically different incarnations, always justifies the oppressor. Deception and self-deception support each other. Here he follows Popper and Talmon, but he is addressing an ambience long immune to their scruples. For Popper and Talmon were appealing to the liberal sensibility against its weakness for the strong and dogmatic. It is not the liberal sensibility with which Levy tangles in France; there is hardly such to tangle with. And his adversaries do not have a weakness for the cult of strength and dogma but a positive infatuation with it. Even if he is less patient than he should be with efforts to rescue socialism from what hitherto has been its destiny in cruelty, it is hard to fault his reading of history. What represents itself as socialism, however distorted or debauched, must be weighed as evidence against the plausibility of the pure ideal.

The raw nerve that Levy has struck among American intellectuals is altogether different from the sensitivities of his own countrymen. It is not, after all, any indigenous American philosophical tradition with which he has engaged. It is something much simpler than that. Although bereft of a supporting structure of coherent ideas, liberal romanticism dies hard. Its facile expectations—that is, Wilson's, Roosevelt's, Kennedy's—have come to naught, more dramatically in the foreign sphere than at home. But the vague hopes wander in search of some vessel to cherish and in which to take refuge: for some it is still *mirabile dictu* the "socialist countries," for others "the third world," for the even less discriminating it is the "damned of the earth" or "primitive peoples" or some such. On these is focused eager *schwarmerei*, composed of heavy doses of illusion and guilt. We, most of us at least, recognize something of these sentiments in ourselves, in friends and associates. They mark us as progressives, after and despite all. Though most of us know that these are vestigial feelings, mythic lags, we are loathe to see them under attack. Which is to say that we are determined often not to see at all.

Levy insists that we see and insists also that there is much to see. Alas, in America as in France, there are many

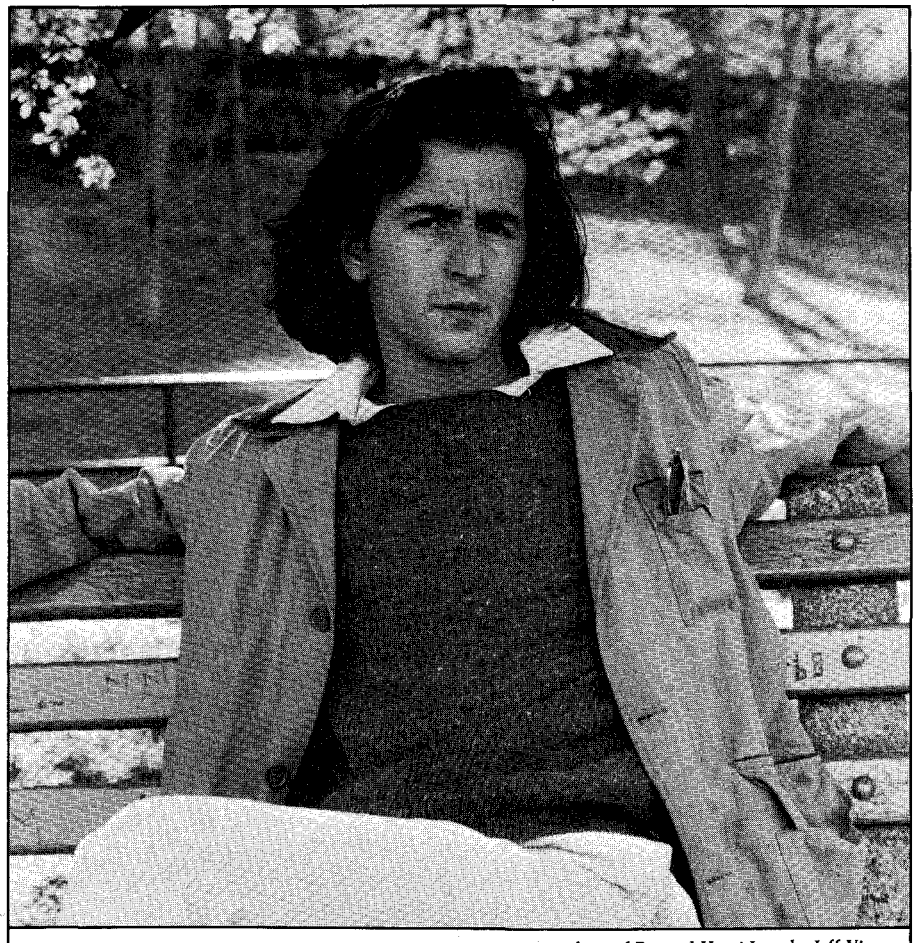

photo of Bernard-Henri Levy by Jeff Vinson

> Pessimism is of no value unless it brings forth at the end a slender but solid bedrock of *certainty* and *refusal*. In this strange game of living . . . I say that we must give in less than ever before to the insupportable. I say that if we cannot raise him up, we must do everything in our power to prevent man from lowering himself.
>
> Bernard-Henri Levy
> from *Barbarism with a Human Face*

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who are never at a loss for words or explanations to neutralize or obviate the spectacle of great wickedness done in the name of some greater good. In America we do not much speak of historical necessity. Auden's hortatory "necessary murder" must here have provoked shudders even in politically headier times. For us the words are mostly of the "you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs" variety, the practical, down-to-earth, concrete manner of explaining away. But this reflects no less the deadened conscience and the atrophied memory. The two are twin goals of both fascist and communist rule, a coincidence with which Levy begins painstakingly to establish an equation. It also offends the residual loyalties of progressive folk, more disheartened by heresy than frustration. What especially disheartens Levy is that those mental habits have conquered so much territory among intellectuals in the democracies.

This he traces to the great illusion of modernity: the beneficence of technology. In an argument made wholly independently of David Noble's brilliant *America by Design* (Knopf) Levy goes over similar ground. Technology is easily fashioned into administration, not simply of goods and services, but of people themselves. On this he is as withering in his critique of capitalism as he is of socialism—though for the usual dishonest reasons his critics choose to ignore his capacity for political even-handedness, which is also his passion for truth. His reading of technological rationality, at least as much as his bitter analysis of the baleful imperatives of utopian or messianic thinking, leads him into direct conflict with the enlightenment legacy in the advanced industrialized societies. Scientific discovery and technology were seen as guarantors of glad tidings for distressed humanity. The more the better. Such certainties are permitted us no longer. The proposed alternative to the failed success of mechanical accumulation is the satisfaction of the self. But this too is repressive, false. Hence Levy's pessimism, which has so vexed one of his reviewers: let's be hopeful, however sparse the evidence which may be mustered for hope.

Levy is the star of *Solzhenitsyn's Children*, a film recently shown on public television; or, more accurately, he is the first among equals of the "new philosophers," whose ideas and influence the film examines. Like theirs, his language is not spare; but it is careful. An adept at polemic unmatched in our country, Levy has demonstrated that negativity and pessimism may yet sustain those values which allow us to judge our policies and ourselves.

Martin Peretz

On Trial at Nuremberg
by Airey Neave

(Little, Brown; $12.95)

I found a good deal of lively reading in this book by one of the British participants in the trial. But I hasten to add that I have a special affinity for the subject matter, having spent two years as a prosecutor at the Nuremberg trials subsequent to the first and largest trial, about which the author writes.

Thus, I found nothing of great importance that was new to me. But for the general public matters are obviously different. What we have here is one more vehicle for educating new generations about the largest and most systematic crimes known to history.

Such readers may be served by a brief account of the proceedings. The trial was held in Nuremberg before a so-called International Military Tribunal (IMT) with a judge from each of the four prosecuting powers: the United States, Great Britain, France and the USSR. It lasted nearly a year from indictment in the fall of 1945 to judgment in the late summer of 1946. There were 21 defendants, who were thought to have had top civil and military roles in carrying out the manifold crimes of the Third Reich. Three were acquitted; of the rest, 11 were sentenced to death. The charges were "crimes against peace" (planning and waging aggressive war), war crimes, and crimes against humanity. Arguments by some that the proceedings involved retroactive—and thus unjust—law pertain solely to the first of these charges; the other charges involved violation of Hague Conventions signed before World War I. The IMT limited convictions for crimes against peace to those who were privy to Hitler's detailed plans to launch particular aggressive wars. Only one person was convicted on this charge alone. This was Rudolph Hess, who was given a life sentence and still languishes by himself in a Berlin prison at the insistence of the USSR. (Neave tells us he has been active in efforts to release Hess.) Those sentenced to hang were thought by the IMT to have played important roles in wholesale murder.

The author has not attempted to give us a heavyweight account of Nuremberg or of its possible application to subsequent events, such as Vietnam. A great deal has been written in that vein; one thinks of that admirably compact book, *Nuremberg and Vietnam*, by Telford Taylor, who succeeded Justice Jackson as chief prosecutor in the subsequent trials. Instead Neave gives us vignettes of the personalities involved, mainly the defendants but also the judges and attorneys for prosecution and defense. Neave had a special background and vantage point from which to view the proceedings. As a youth of 17, he had lived with a German family in Berlin in 1933 and had once found himself in a parade of sports organizations that enabled him to witness Hitler's early efforts to indoctrinate German youth at first hand.

He studied jurisprudence at Oxford and was aiming to become a barrister when war broke out. He joined the RAF and had what the British call a good war, meeting the Gestapo as a prisoner of war, learning how to escape, and then working with military intelligence in organizing escape routes for others. At the close of the European war, he was sent by the British War Crimes Executive to secure evidence at the Krupp headquarters in Essen. He would most probably have joined the British prosecution team at Nuremberg but for the fact that Gustav Krupp was dropped as a defendant by reason of senility.

As matters worked out, Neave at the age of 29 became an officer of the court, first with the job of serving the indictment on the defendants and assisting them in finding counsel and later as a commissioner to hear evidence

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as to alleged criminal organizations such as the SS (the hardest of the hard-core Nazis), the Gestapo, and the top leaders of the Nazi party.

Most of the book consists of flashback sketches of each defendant's career, built around Neave's visits to their cells to serve copies of the indictment. We also get what might be called flash-forwards, comments made many years later in the memoirs of others, including the defendants who were not hanged (most notably Albert Speer); Francis Biddle, the American judge on the Tribunal; Sir Norman Birkett, the British alternate judge and a devoted diarist; the American colonel who was in charge of the prison; and the American psychologist who was in constant touch with the defendants.

For a sample of Neave's highly personalized, somewhat melodramatic accounts, we follow him on his first visit to Hermann Göring. He clearly was the lead actor among the defendants, as he had been (next to Hitler) in the Nazi rise to power, in war preparations, and in virtually all the evils of the Third Reich—including transmission of Hitler's decision to go forward with the "final solution" of the Jewish problem. Neave starts with several pages summarizing Göring's career, including his reputation as a flying ace in World War I. Then his description becomes more dramatic:

> *As the cell was unlocked, I braced myself to meet him. . . . The cell was crowded and I felt shut in with Goering. Once again that urgent desire to break out came to me, as it had often done since my days in the town gaol of Colditz. . . . The photograph of Goering's daughter, so like her father, touched me. Then I suddenly felt angry. It was impossible to forget the Krupp guards who caught a prisoner trying to keep a snapshot of his parents. They seized it, tore it up, and beat him till he bled . . .*

Finally Neave explains to Göring that he is serving a copy of the indictment and Göring says, "So it has come."

And so it goes. One may doubt that Neave entertained all these (and many other) thoughts in the short time he was serving and explaining the indictment, accompanied by several other people. But some poetic license is no doubt allowed in these matters.

Neave also offers a chapter on the art of cross-examination, in which he compares Jackson's performance (mainly with respect to Göring) unfavorably with the trial work of the top British attorneys, who were not only barristers by profession but had the marvelous names of Sir Hartley Shawcross and Sir David Maxwell-Fife. Neave's observations are hardly novel to anyone who read contemporary accounts in the *New Yorker* magazine by Janet Flanner and Rebecca West (who contributes a foreword to the book). It seems to me, however, that Neave goes far overboard in the importance he attaches to the difficulties that Jackson had with Göring. He even suggests that things would have been better if the chief prosecutor for the United States had been Francis Biddle, the American judge on the tribunal. In this connection, he notes that Biddle was formerly attorney general of the United States, a point that is wholly irrelevant: unlike an attorney general in Great Britain, our attorney general is not required to have experience as a trial lawyer. Neave also fails to note that Jackson himself held the office before he was named to the Supreme Court.

Whatever Jackson's shortcomings in cross-examination, he was enormously gifted at oral and written exposition. Neave says Jackson's closing statement was too "emotive" for his taste. But he has the grace to tell us that "Lord Elwyn-Jones [one of the British prosecutors and now Lord Chancellor] thought his two major speeches at the start and close of the trial deserved to be ranked among the finest forensic utterances of all time."

Finally, no one's conviction or acquittal turned on any attorney's skill at cross-examination. Convictions in the first and subsequent trials at Nuremberg were based on a vast volume of documents which the Germans themselves had created and which the allied governments captured as they advanced into Germany. Whatever one's doubts about what Nuremberg accomplished, this much is clear: the documentation has performed a great service to the cause of history. No one can successfully assert that crimes were not committed, that many millions were not deported to Germany and grievously maltreated as slave labor, or that many millions of Jews were not exterminated.

Charles S. Lyon

Charles S. Lyon is the Gerald L. Wallace professor at New York University Law School and was a deputy chief counsel for prosecution of war crimes at Nuremberg.

Community Technology
by Karl Hess

(Harper & Row; $2.95 paperback)

The left-wing intellectual who in the course of a life makes a tortured migration to the right is a stock figure of American cultural iconography. Dos Passos, Eastman, Lerner; the names come immediately to mind. Not so easily recalled are those thinkers who have chosen the reverse itinerary. The most striking feature of *Community Technology* is the discovery that while America has been "moving to the right," Karl Hess has been moving quietly to the left. The former Goldwater speech-writer has embraced the most persistent offspring of the social movements of the 1960s: the "small is beautiful" celebration of ecological self-reliance and grass-roots community.

Hess would never describe himself as a leftist; he has that peculiarly American diffidence about ideological self-definition. For him, both left and right are bankrupt in confronting the decline of our society. Ideologies only deform what is really "an inescapable observation."

> *People feel vague and dissatisfied, troubled, when their work seems to have no meaning or to be just part of some interchangeable inexplicable machine; when their life shrinks into the confines of a single house or apartment; when neighborliness is lost; when all life seems compartmentalized, packaged, processed. . . .*

Yet when he names the enemy or imagines an alternative, Hess shares many themes with the 1960s left: an uncompromising anti-corporatism, a critique of "the pervasive mood of

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consumerism" in America and a commitment to participatory democracy. In his urgency over the sorry state of community in this society of alienated individuals, in his championing of true social needs against the programmed desires of the consumer culture, Hess evokes quite another Karl—the young Marx of the economic and philosophic manuscripts.

Like Marx, Hess wants to discover the material foundations for a new social life, what he terms "local liberty." *Community Technology* is about those tools, methods and techniques which make possible small independent communities founded on cooperation and self-reliance. Where Marx envisioned a commonwealth of producers, Hess describes what might be termed a commonwealth of communities. "Community, not nation or corporation, could be the basis of social life, permitting all those affected by decisions to be participants in those decisions." And with the conviction of the converted, Hess believes that this future is simply waiting to be built by those with the imagination and energy to do so.

Hess is most intriguing, however, not in these philosophical ruminations but when he recounts his own efforts to create such a community. *Community Technology*, while not quite a "how to" book, is a reflection on a concrete experience. All the set pieces of the "new localism" are here: hydroponic farms, bacteriological toilets, solar cookers, roof-top gardens, but they lose some of their abstractness, implanted as they are in a story about a real place, the neighborhood of Adams-Morgan in Washington, DC.

In spite of the general tone of optimism, Hess's tale about Adams-Morgan is the story of a gutsy failure. For a few years in the early 1970s, a strange combination of counterculture drop-outs, new left activists and poor blacks came together in this lower-class neighborhood to create the Adams-Morgan Organization—"a rash and wonderful tilt at making itself a truly participatory community." Hess and his compatriots started an appropriate technology project, planted gardens, raised fish in basement tanks, all as an experiment in community self-sufficiency. But the rash and wonderful tilt could not sustain itself and Hess blames Adams-Morgan's blacks. Too dependent on the welfare ethic to grasp the necessity of self-reliance, the black community turned from the neighborhood to the city as a whole and especially to the social welfare programs of the city government. Blacks were not after participation but power. "[They] . . . were not interested in changing the way social decisions were made. What they wanted was to have the power to make those decisions—to have power *in*, not power *to change*, the system." The vision of the participatory community split along racial lines. The experiments of the middle-class counterculture whites broke upon the rock of the "culture of poverty."

> *Government programs aim at getting money for poor people. Our hope was that knowledge would in the long run be more useful, provide more money, and eventually strike at the system-causes of poverty. . . . But the entire relationship of our work to the neighborhood suggests . . . that the culture of poverty is not easily diverted beyond itself.*

This story of the Adams-Morgan Organization raises serious questions about the political adequacy of the community technology movement. It does not fit in easily with the cheery philosophizing which brackets it, almost as if Hess does not want to face its implications. He simply reasserts the necessity for more effort, a stronger will to bring the commonwealth of communities into being. After the fascinating chapter on Adams-Morgan comes an entirely banal fantasy on "what it could be like," in which Washington is pictured a giant commune of friendly, cooperative neighborhoods and where a solar collector graces every roof in the Adams-Morgan business district.

Hess may deride the ideologues of the left and right but what he needs is a more sophisticated ideology himself. In his move to the left, he has uncritically accepted the most illusory principle of the movements of the 1960s: that somehow politics can be reduced to culture, "life-style." Like the counterculture, he understands neither the nature nor the uses of political power; as a result, his call for small-scale social change takes place in a vacuum. I suspect that for all their dependence on the "culture of poverty," Adams-Morgan blacks understood the realities of power in America far better than Hess. For the poor to demand power "in" the system is to "change" it in important and radical ways. Infatuated with his vision of the participatory community (a vision which borders on nostalgic yearning for the simple ways of small-town America and, as such, may be less alien to Hess's Goldwater past than it first appears), Hess forgets that it is but one of many strategies for social change and a very limited one at that. In the end, the comparison with Marx is misleading. Hess's true forbear is Fourier, the utopian *technologue* of pre-Marxist socialism. Perhaps his self-reliant communities will be the phalansteries of the 1980s; I fear they will be about as successful.

Robert Howard

Robert Howard is a freelance writer.

Robin Winks on mysteries

At Button's
by Garry Wills
(Andrews and McMeel; $8.95)

Circus Couronne
by R. Wright Campbell
(Pocket Books; $2.25)

Darkness at Pemberley
by T. H. White
(Dover; $3.50)

The War of the Running Fox
by Bob Langley
(Scribners; $6.95)

The Sinkiang Executive
by Adam Hall
(Doubleday; $7.95)

The Blooding
by William Darrid
(Bantam Original; $2.25)

A Pinch of Snuff
by Reginald Hill
(Harper; $9.95)

The Bibliography of Crime Fiction, 1749-1975
by Allen J. Hubin
(Publisher's Inc., Drawer P, Del Mar, California; $59.95)

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One can understand why literary editors, reviewers, professors of literature and my wife refuse to take detective and mystery writing seriously, when one sees so many practitioners of the craft (or of what ought to be a craft) scorn their own work. Bastard children indeed, some must think. Else, how explain Garry Wills's release of his "novel of suspense," *At Button's*? Here is one of our best political commentators, the winner of a National Book Critics award, a nominee for a National Book Award, author of some of the best written quasi-history around, a person who in *Inventing America* opens the eyes of many Americans to the significance of the Scottish Enlightenment, giving us a book so bad one must believe that it was a youthful folly originally consigned to the bottom drawer of the apprentice and now, through what mistaken intent one can only guess, resurrected into a thriller. It was (I think) H.G. Wells who said that there is no passion so great in life as the desire to change someone else's draft, and in this sense *At Button's* is a truly passionate book. For it starts with a cerebral and compelling premise: that the meetings of a club of 18th-century scholars who specialize in Joseph Addison are a cover for spies and for spying on spies, and it introduces a potentially appealing protagonist, a librarian in the New York Public Library who invents names and occupations for the researchers he observes using the room over which he presides. One researcher, gently satirized, is "majoring in understanding" and has chosen a study of prostitutes for her project. Then suddenly, as though Wills had grown tired of his contrivance at mid-point, the action turns into a tissue of cliches, the writing becomes leaden, and the flower that appeared to be opening before our eyes is clumsily trampled underfoot. Nothing turns out to have meant anything very significant.

Everything means something significant in R. Wright Campbell's *Circus Couronne*: the outbreak of World War I is at hand, and although history tells us that Inspector Yves Faucon will not prevent it, we are prepared to stand by him in his attempts. Faucon is on hand at Sarajevo when the Archduke Francis Ferdinand is assassinated; he detects an undetected would-be assassin who, he believes, has escaped as a member of a circus. He follows the circus, interrogating its members involving himself emotionally with them, discovering the secrets of those who would hide from society as freaks. All of this is quite promising, but Campbell is one of those writers who purports to dress landscape, locale, actors and actresses in the accents of the time. Several reviewers profess to have found the novel magical, of high merit, historically exact and suspenseful, further indication that no one really takes the genre seriously. For what is one to make of a book which signals every twist of plot in advance, which is choked with unlikely aphoristic conversations, which betrays its central secret in the moment of introducing it, and which (oh, rich, rich historical research) lets a steamy nationalist from what was then known as French Indo-China, who hopes world war will help free her people, refer to herself as a Cochinchinese (a term reserved for the French-speaking Vietnamese, et al, who chose to collaborate with the French government).

There are other ways of showing disrespect for the genre, of course. In a welcome effort to remind us that so well-regarded a writer as T. H. White indulged in such stuff, Dover has reprinted his *Darkness at Pemberley*, a gracious and mildly entertaining tale set in a Cambridge college and at a country house in 1932. But the publisher has ill served this once and future classic by putting it into the hands of a copy-writer who tells us that its detective is from Scotland Yard when he clearly is from the Cambridge constabulary and that the first murder occurs at Cambridge when, in fact, it is the second murder that takes place in the university. All hail Dover's welcome work, the stuff of scholars; now if there were just a bit more scholarship applied to the effort, all would be well.

All is not well with *The War of the Running Fox*, if one wishes for even a modicum of logic. Jack Higgins is quoted in praise of the book, which should and does tell us what to expect: a good bit of running about by manly men over inadequately described countryside for purposes that seem, and later prove to be, remarkably silly. The plot here involves a desperate effort by white Rhodesians to hijack a load of plutonium from Britain's Lake District and either force Britain to back the Rhodesian position in southern Africa or spirit the plutonium away to Rhodesia or. . . . Bob Langley, the creator of this farrago, doesn't pay his work the respect of rereading it, so we learn various matters twice, we are expected to believe that there could be a yet unknown mine in the Lake District (perhaps England's best-trodden ground), and only a scene on the Morecombe Sands, as the tide rolls in, provides any excitement.

But all is not disheartening for this quarterly report. There is, for example, a new Adam Hall, *The Sinkiang Executive*. It is not Hall's best, but it is thoroughly professional, and there is one long session—devoted to briefing Hall's series agent Quiller on how to fly across Soviet airspace to the Sino-Soviet border—that is stunningly well done, tense, elliptical, without a misplaced word. The story line is simple and clean: Quiller must use a captured Russian jet fighter to fly below radar pickup to reach a target area which is a trap. The British, for whom he works, provide no means of escape from the target area and appear not to care whether Quiller can escape or not, since he has caused them acute embarrassment by behaving, for the first time in eight books, like a human being instead of a computer. *The Sinkiang Executive* is the best of this lot.

Adam Hall, as Elleston Trevor, is an old hand; a new hand, William Darrid, also proves to be quite good. Darrid is not new to writing, for he has done much of it for the world of television, but this is his first attempt at a thriller. The theme is one encountered in Ibsen and Dürrenmatt: the town that cannot face its own contamination, and perhaps destruction, so that one honest person must stand alone against collective cowardice. Overriding this theme is another: a boy becoming a man. Put like this, the flat outline appears to be cliché-ridden, but in the telling one forgets the outline. At the core is an outbreak of rabies in a small town "east of the Purgatoire and west of the Cheyenne Bottoms and south of Smoky Hill and north of Cimarron," which is to say southwestern Kansas with the Arkansas River left out. As an illustration of how easily rabies may be spread through loved pets, and coming on top of recent news stories about rabid foxes in Switzerland and Austria, *The Blooding*—which sets rabies against man killing man in the autumn of wartime 1944—is a superb debut.

One ends with a disappointment: Reginald Hill's *A Pinch of Snuff*. If this

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column appeared frequently enough to be called a Department, one could frame a nicely pompous sentence in the manner of the weekly reviewers: in these pages a few months ago, this Department praised Hill's last book, *Ruling Passion*, with affection at the least and passion on occasion, and now Mr. Hill has let us down. Well, he hasn't really, for this pinch of snuff is about pornographic snuff films, and for so unappetizing a subject both the crime and the detection of it are well and even delicately handled. Detective-Inspector Peter Pascoe is becoming a character in his own right and the unpleasant Superintendent Dalziel hovers appropriately in the background, and the writing is wry, quietly witty, always literate. The problem is, Hill isn't prepared to face up to the implications of his material, and he tries to find a way out with a melodramatic conclusion that is at odds with the mood and pace of the bulk of the book. Anyone looking for titillation will not find it here; nor will one find moral satisfaction.

Of course one often doesn't find moral satisfaction in detective fiction these days. Perhaps this is why some readers have been driven toward the perimeters of the field, moving in either direction through the continuum that comprises detective-mystery-thriller-spy-horror-gothic-ghost and western formulaic fiction, to find the old, compelling satisfactions of Chandler, Sayers, Ambler or even Luke Short. Having found just what one likes, the reader who finds the formula for the pabulum wanted to quiet more urgent and real horrors, has needed a guide to others who are vendors of the same pabulum. We now have a pharmacopeia of the genre, Allen J. Hubin's magnificent (and magnificently priced) *Bibliography of Crime Fiction, 1749-1975*. Users of Ordean Hagen's *Who Done It?* have long found it exasperating, and there are those who do not care to have Barzun and Taylor thrust their opinions upon them. Hubin has sought to provide a bibliography of all crime fiction, including the hyphenated growths spun out above, in a single massive volume. He provides cross references under all the pseudonyms an author has used (like Adam Hall? See the list of his other books as Elleston Trevor), full information on publication, an index by titles, alternate titles so that you do not buy in its American guise an Andrew Garve or Agatha Christie already read under its English mask—in short, just about everything one could want. Now when more is not enough, the dedicated reader can have on the shelf just the guide to furthering his addiction. Someone should have banned this book, for it is dangerous—there they are, two Gavin Black's I didn't know about, and two F. W. Bronson's, and a Julian Symons, and. . . . All this when I really should be *Inventing America* with Garry Wills.

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Washington Diarist

Treaty of Washington

It will be called, by the time historians get around to writing it, the Treaty of Washington—a tribute to the American president who, as Menahem Begin said, "intransigently" mediated and fought to bring it about. May the fates preside over its fortunes more kindly than they have over other treaties of peace, like the ones signed at Locarno in 1925, whose very terms became a virtually irresistible invitation to war. Let's face it: that is Israel's quite reasonable apprehension, given the tangible concessions it has made to Egypt, and given also those it is expected to make on the West Bank to people who won't even deign to sit at the negotiating table. There is no great fear that Israel will violate the Sinai arrangements, but no one is quite sure that Egypt won't. That's why US commitments to Jerusalem about what we would do if Egypt doesn't live up to the agreements are so important. The Egyptians have already denounced the US-Israeli agreement embodying some of these assurances, though Sadat could have the same if he wished. Sadat will not need to call in his chits, but Begin or his successors may well have to do precisely that, depending on what happens in the rest of the Arab world, and no doubt also depending on who succeeds Sadat, how and when.

Senator William Proxmire and a few other nay-sayers are complaining about the treaty's monetary costs to be borne by American taxpayers. I wonder what it has cost the US to rearm the Middle East after the previous wars. Senator Frank Church, I'm told, estimated the total tag at about $25 billion. Peace is not only better than war; it is also a bargain.

I have not been one of Jimmy Carter's great fans. He seems to me a stranger to inspiration. The success of his Middle East diplomacy, moreover, is a tribute less to his skill than to his doggedness. Someone less dogged, though, might have abandoned the pursuit of peace long ago, treating the Arab-Israel conflict as a permanent feature of history. Standing last week between the two representative adversaries he'd brought together, he spoke the vernacular and cadences of American innocence, our lost idyll. He reflected our people's best, if possibly mistaken, view of ourselves. He established a rapport also with those who trusted him least. This rapport is more important to the nation than it is even to his own political fortunes.

Unfortunately the president seems unable to let his achievements be. So at least twice in recent days he's been stretching out his hand to the PLO. This does not encourage the Israelis. And it makes trouble for the Egyptians, who also abhor the PLO but cannot be seen to be less pan-Arab than the Americans.

Roughly 2000 people shouted their angry slogans across Lafayette Park to the peace celebrants on the White House lawn. There were few Americans among the protesters. Despite the hostility of the organized left and its journals to the Camp David accords, there are not many Americans who will denounce peace. Many of those gathered in opposition were Arab students, mostly *déclassé* cafe intellectuals whose vocation is belligerent politics. At least as many were Iranian students. Hearing them chant and reading their banners, it was hard to tell whether they hated the shah or Sadat more. Certainly Begin and Carter seemed low on their list of villains. I know a few youngish Iranians here who claimed that they were refugees from the Pahlavi tyranny, and enthusiasts of an Islamic republic. I met one of these acquaintances as I walked back through the park toward *TNR*'s offices. "Now that the shah is out and the Islamic republic is in," I asked, "why don't you go home?" "Are you kidding?" he answered.

At the end of the evening festivities, guests were invited to dance in the great public rooms of the presidential mansion. A Marine Corps band provided the music. I'm sorry to report that the Marines are still in transition. They can no longer invade, but they cannot yet play.

Middle East peace, we are told repeatedly, depends on a just solution of the Palestinian Arab problem. I don't think that's true, especially if by just solution is meant a Palestinian state on the West Bank. First of all, establishing a Palestinian state will do nothing to ameliorate the deeper intra-Arab fratricide apparent all over the region. In fact, another Arab state would be just another forum for that fratricide, a more compact and more diverse Lebanon, with the Russians playing an ever more active and mischievous role. The Palestinian Arabs aren't now and never have been the center of the Arab-Israeli dispute. The 1948 war dealt with them only to the extent that the Arab powers hoped to seize for themselves those areas of partitioned Palestine designated by the UN as a Palestinian Arab state. The Palestinians were victims of previous wars, but were never the cause. Peace must solve their grievances, but the wars were fought against Israel's right to live. Thus far only the Egyptians (and apparently the Omanis) are prepared to live with that right.

***New Republic* editors** were all over town last week seeing Egyptians, other Arabs, and Israelis. A few of us met with Shimon Peres, leader of Israel's opposition Labor Party. Peres thinks the autonomy scheme will come a cropper. "Autonomy" means too little to Begin and too much to the Arabs. Labor doesn't want Israel to rule over any more Arabs, but it doesn't think Israel can survive in its precarious pre-1967 frontiers. The Camp David framework provides for negotiations under Security Council resolution 242. I'll hazard a guess that as the autonomy scheme fails for want of partners willing to deal, the road to peace will be found in a partition of the West Bank. The populated areas will become independent Arab turf and the contested security zones and Jerusalem will remain the domain of Israel. First Begin's government will have to fall. This will happen primarily on account of Begin's disastrous economic policies, but also because Begin's finagle factor as a negotiator is now down to zero. That's Labor's fortune, and the fortune of peace as well.

With all the poetic visions of peace contained in the Bible, why did Carter, Sadat and Begin all choose the most obvious one—the lines from Isaiah about beating swords into plowshares? It can't be for lack of familiarity with the scriptures, though perhaps this is true of their respective speechwriters. Perhaps they all decided it was not the right kind of crowd for a more unfamiliar reference or complex metaphor. Indeed among the 1300 dinner guests, there were very few scholars or artists—the type of people with whom I, at least, would like to celebrate an historic occasion. Of course more of them would have left less room for politicians, contributors, media types—in short, people like me. All in all, though, the politics of the occasion may have been terrific, but there was little poetry to it.

M.P.

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Pay Up... Or Be Fired.

Giles Breaux is a highly decorated ex-GI who fought against tyranny and for freedom in World War II and the Korean War. Today he's fighting again—for his own personal freedom.

This time the battlefield is the California farm where he works—his opponent is Cesar Chavez, who rules the members of his United Farmworkers of America with an iron hand.

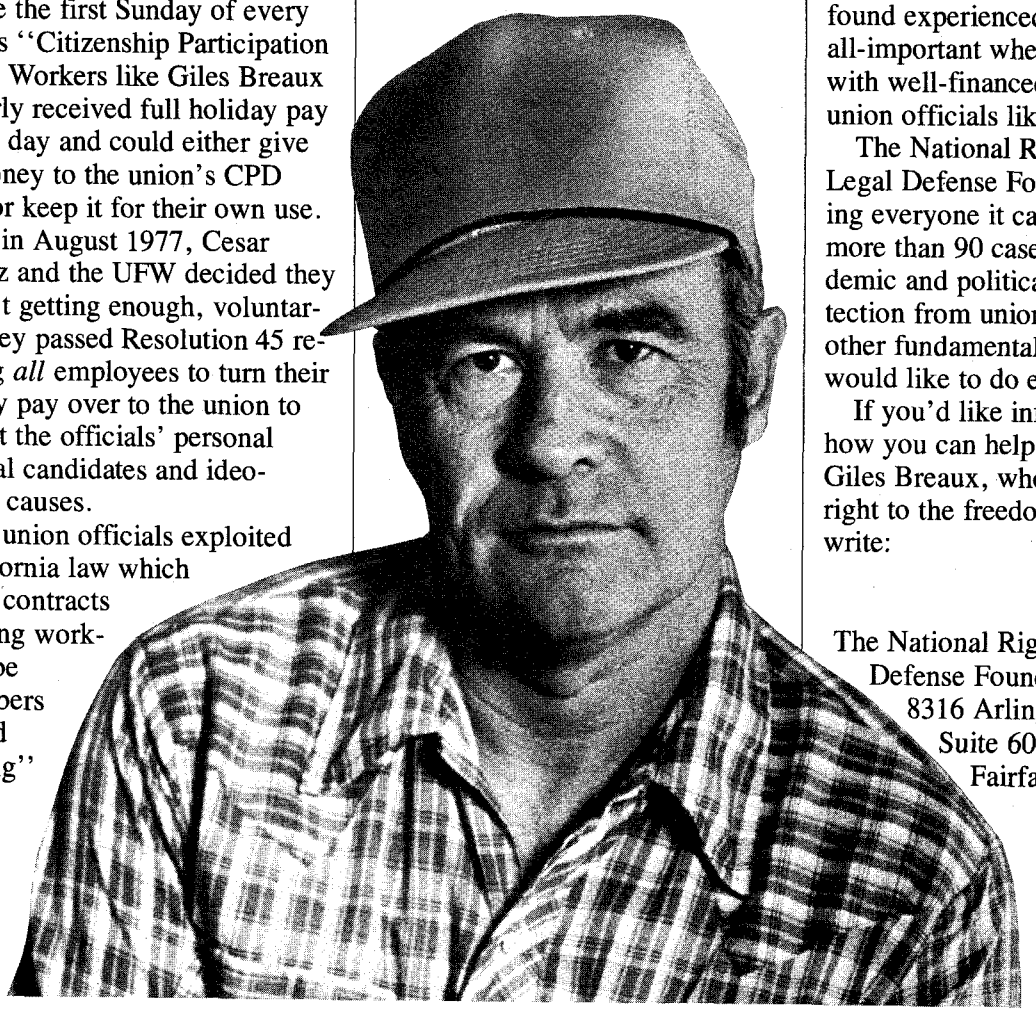
UFW contracts with employers reserve the first Sunday of every June as "Citizenship Participation Day." Workers like Giles Breaux formerly received full holiday pay for the day and could either give the money to the union's CPD Fund or keep it for their own use.

But in August 1977, Cesar Chavez and the UFW decided they weren't getting enough, voluntarily. They passed Resolution 45 requiring *all* employees to turn their holiday pay over to the union to support the officials' personal political candidates and ideological causes.

The union officials exploited a California law which allows contracts requiring workers to be "members in good standing" of a union to keep their jobs. And the union is the sole judge of a "good" member.

The UFW warned Giles Breaux to turn over his holiday pay or run the risk of being declared a member not in good standing. Breaux's answer was to the point: "I have a right to do what I want to with my money." He refused to pay up, and was immediately threatened with being fired.

That's when the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation stepped in and filed suit on behalf of Breaux and 11 other members of the UFW. The Chavez union was charged with oppression, fraud, malice, and violation of the workers' constitutional rights. The suit also asked the court to strike down the California law that allows the union to have absolute power over workers by requiring full union membership as a condition of employment.



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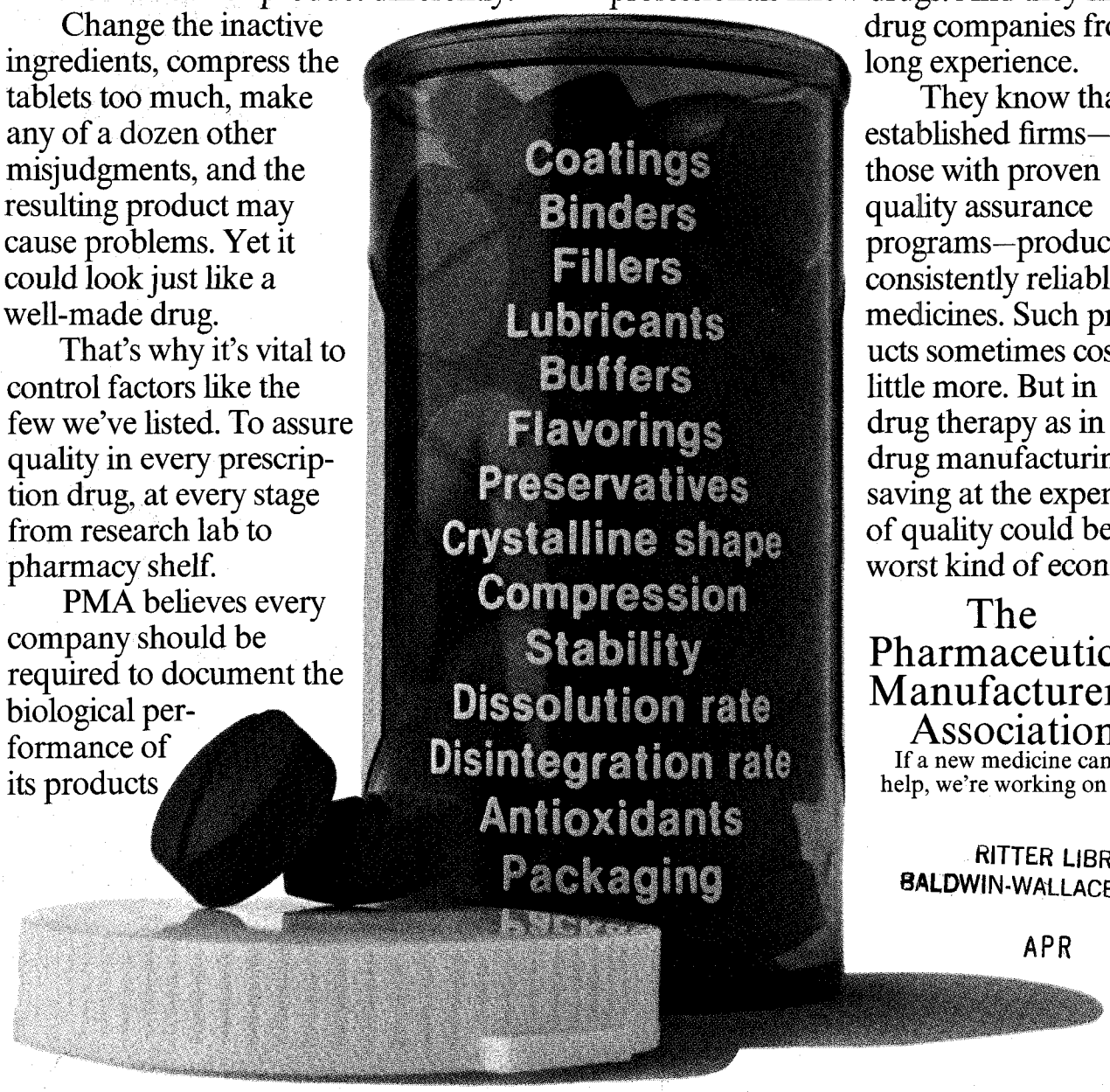

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